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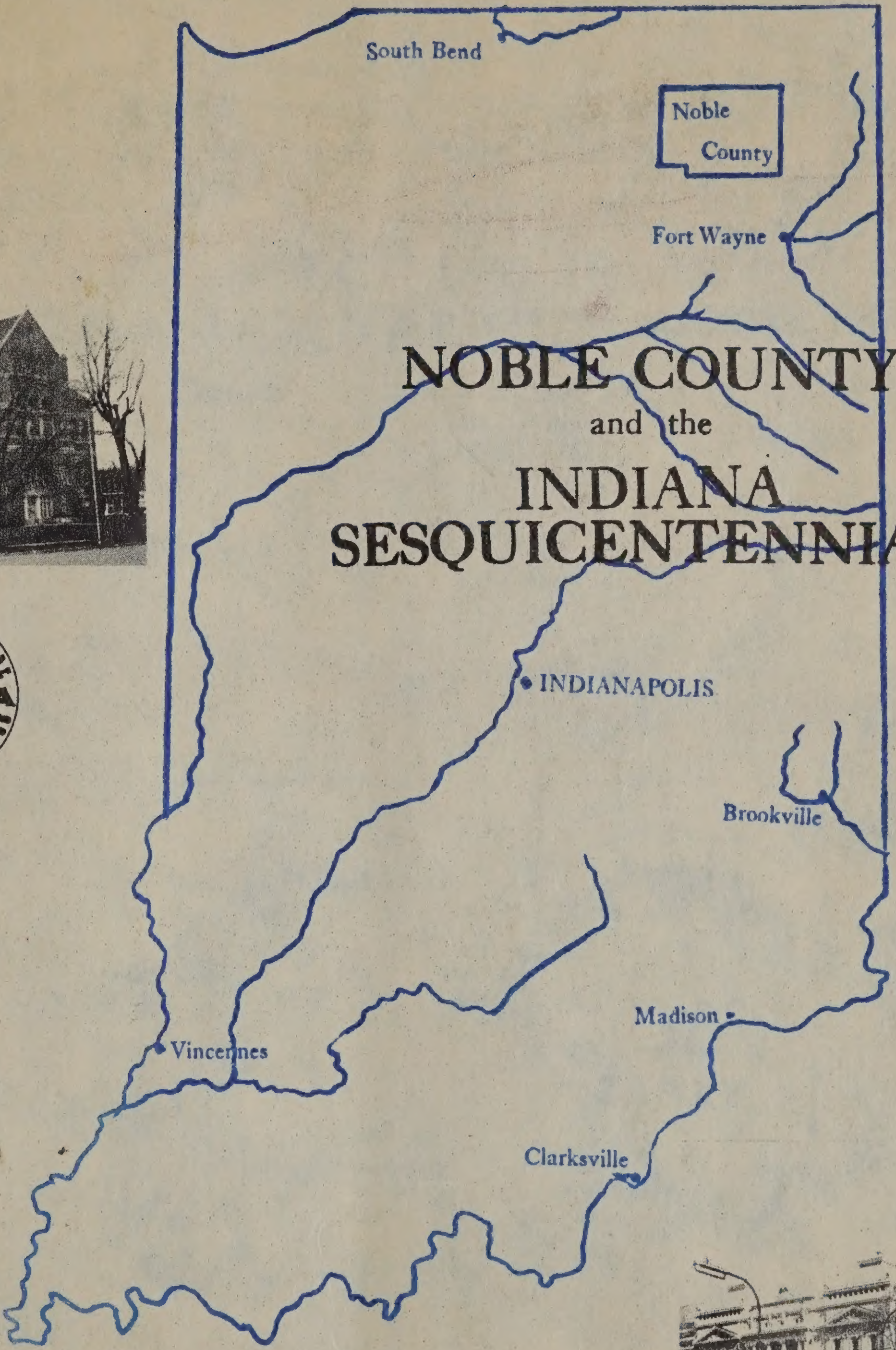
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NOBLE COUNTY
and the
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DECADES OF DECISION

as history of Noble County
from prehistoric times to the present

by

NORMAN J. CARTER

Staff writer, Fort Wayne News-Sentinel

THE PASSAGE OF YEARS

a sesquicentennial pageant for Noble County

written and directed by

Paul W. Ashby

Articles edited,
photographs and copy photography
by
Paul W. Ashby

Published by
The Noble County Sesquicentennial Committee
Mrs. Quentin F. Stultz, Chr.

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Paul W. Ashby

DECADES OF DECISION

by

NORMAN J. CARTER

The Noble County Sesquicentennial committee in recognition of the unfailing interest in the history of Noble County, and the never ceasing efforts to restore Stone's Trace dedicates this book to
Graydon Blue.

A BRIEF HISTORY

OF NOBLE COUNTY

INDIANA

FOREWORD

Neither time nor space would permit a Noble County history of broad scope. At best it is a profile of sorts that may or may not bring into focus those who in 1816, when the state was born, began turning toward Indiana with the thought, "That's where I might like to live."

This does not pretend to be a "history" in the strict sense that it is exhaustive, for it is not. For every sentence, there are ten that could have been written had time been a friend and not a foe.

Neither does it pretend to withstand critical examination by older, wiser men whose knowledge of the county has fattened through years of interest in and devotion to the days when Noble County first befriended the pioneers as they probed farther West.

Of necessity, the contemporary draws with trust upon the observations and research of others of another day, and what is drawn is often in conflict. If there are errors, as indeed there are, let them be on the side of truth rather than fiction.

As a case in point, it can be noted that even the origin of Noble County's very name is in question. Most documents today claim the county was named after Noah Noble, an Indiana Whig governor serving from 1831 to 1837. This seems perfectly reasonable. Still, a publication of the Indiana State Chamber of Commerce declares the county borrowed its name from James Noble, the first United States Senator from Indiana. At best, then, absolute truth is elusive and its flight into the receding past is swift and difficult to overtake.

It is with these reservations and apologies that I have refined, in part, the many thousands of words that patient men have earlier assembled in their close inspection of records that either no longer exist or, through lassitude, have escaped the modern observer. In many cases there is no "refinement", since passages of some length have been quoted directly. To these writers of old the debt will forever remain unsatisfied.

The account ends with relatively brief explorations into each of Noble County's thirteen townships, smelted from the ore inherited from historians who lived close to, but not necessarily in, the period marking Noble County's early years.

NJC

At what point does the history of Noble County begin?

Poetically, it would be when God created heaven and earth, but somewhere along the long line it must be linked with man and his own unending, restless enterprise.

For most practical purposes, Noble County history begins with that of Indiana when in 1816 it was admitted as the nineteenth State of the Union. Still it would be some years before Noble County would be defined politically and geographically, and even then with some question and confusion about its dimensions.

One hundred and fifty years ago what is now Noble County was little more than a refuge for surviving Indians who three years earlier had revolted for the last time in the Indiana Territory and were defeated by General William Henry Harrison at the Battle of Tippecanoe.

These Indians, what few there were when the county first began drawing white settlers, were a wretched lot. They were given, we are told, to begging, stealing and strong drink, but perhaps no more so than their white brothers of another and later year when lawlessness reached such a point that Noble County was singled out as a place for the meek and the honest to avoid.

The Indians, in any case, add little or nothing to local color this sesquicentennial year when counties, cities and villages probe the distant past for heroics, drama and downright blood-letting that set them apart from the historically drab neighbor.

If in Noble County there were sanguine massacres, they have been blithely overlooked by the historian, which is highly unlikely. Were there daring Indian intrigue or bold raids on white outposts, these too have been ignored. Or, turning to a later year, there are no settings for significant incidents related to the War Between the States.

Since there are no historical trappings of this kind to be found in Noble County, the modern writer and balladeer are handicapped in the very beginning if they expect to draw on the Indian, the Civil War, or any other wellspring of great depth, for legend that would add lustre to their accounts in story and in song.

This is not to say, though, that Noble County is historically barren, for wherever man first trod he has left a trail that tells a story worth telling again, and in telling, it is to be seen that the contribution of these pioneers, unspectacular as it may be, has its important cubit to fill in the cornerstone undergirding all America.

In the case of Noble County, there is Joel Bristol, credited as its first white settler. Joel is not spectacular, but one must say he represents the hardy breed that helped push America to the west in its conquest of space, as forbidding then as interplanetary challenges today. Bristol, a man of the soil, drifted in to settle what is now Noble Township, about three and one-half miles southeast of today's Wolf Lake. History records that this was on April 4, 1827.

It is convenient to pinpoint Bristol for this distinction, for this is the name passed from one generation to another, and to agree is easier than to dispute. The historian with a passion for utter accuracy, however, might question the claim made for Bristol. He would point out, without doubt, that white French fur traders pursued their rugged occupation in this area during the 1700's. After assessing the odds, the scholar might reasonably conclude that at least one of them ended his travels and for all practical purposes "settled down" in what was to become Noble County. In this sense, Joel Bristol's pedestal sways slightly in the winds of uncertainty, but it serves no useful purpose to argue the point in its many technicalities. One of these technicalities, by the way, could be a record indicating that the county did not become a legal entity until 1836 and with this the case, Bristol in 1827 really was a resident of Allen County, the boundaries of which then encompassed what was to become Noble.

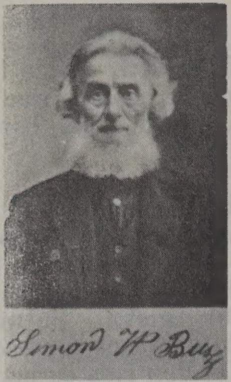
Joel Bristol, in any case, stands today as the figure who cleared a modest tract, built a humble cabin and lived off the soil, rich and virgin, very likely untouched by white hand or iron plow. Perhaps it is far better to have Joel the first white settler than a French fur trader, an adventurer who hardly meets the ground rules set down by today's history buffs.

Whether we like it or not, the history of Noble County unfolds only as the commonplace. What happened here was being repeated scores of times through the length and breadth of the fledgling state. It was no less heroic, to be sure, for it was heroism to cast one's lot with the unknown rather than remain where European and New World cultures combined to tame and exploit the land, giving it a secure civility and providing comforts that in their day were comparable to the luxuries of more than a century later. But Bristol's heroism was the commonplace rather than the exception, and so was that of other pioneers who deepened frontiers, made the wilderness retreat and helped carve with raw and bleeding hand a tremendous nation.

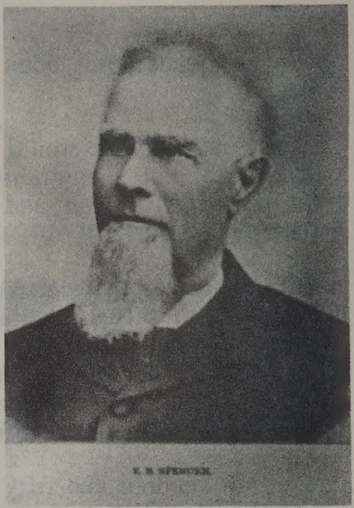
Since the heroism of Bristol and that of his contemporaries was commonplace, it is difficult to feed on them for a dramatic account of Noble County's history as Indiana marks its sesquicentennial year. Still, this in no way diminishes Joel and his contribution.

There are indeed counties in Indiana that can point today to Indian battles that charted a major shift in the course of history. There are Hoosier communities that can claim Abraham Lincoln. There are areas, like New Harmony, that can have a field day with such interesting impracticalities as an experiment in communal living. There are counties directly involved in the Civil War, a future president, an invention that helped shape today's economy and technology.

Prominent Citizens of Early Noble County

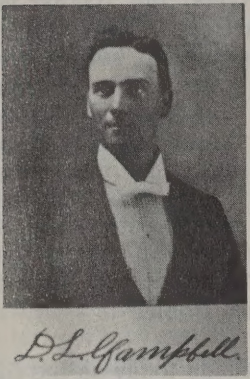

Simon W Busz

Simon Busz
Early farmer,
Noble Township

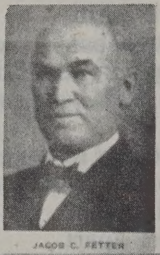

E. B. SPENCER

Edward B. Spencer
Helped father build
sawmill near Albion,
real estate.

As is usual in any settlement the first inhabitants are farmers, so it is not to be wondered at that most of the men shown on these pages were farmers. A few industrialists, politicians and bankers and a progenitor of many physicians are in the list. An attempt was made to include one from each township. All the portraits were photographed from Alvord's "History of Noble County."


D. L. Campbell

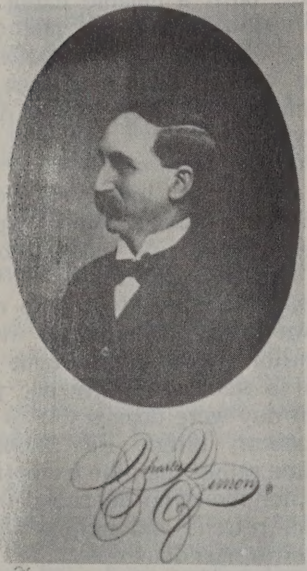
David L. Campbell
Cromwell, railroader,
livery business


JACOB C. FETTER

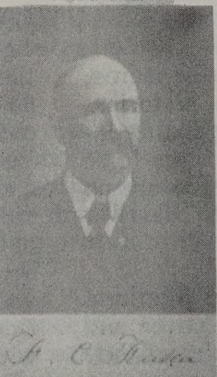
Jacob Fetter
Kendallville, Banker

Yours affecty
H. Wood
And son Wilbur—aged [illegible]

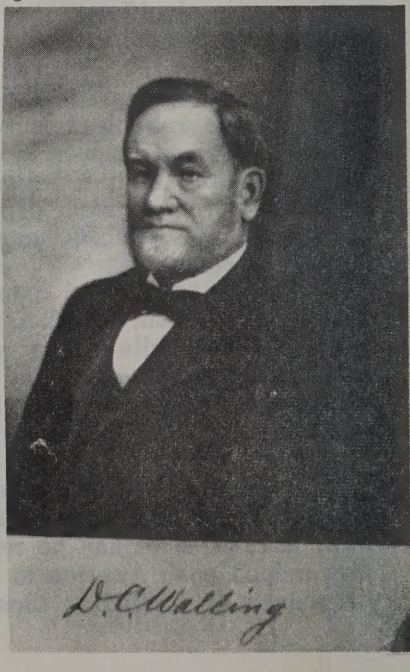
Harrison Wood
Sparta Township, first
threshing machine,
Justice of Peace, sheriff,
founded Cromwell, sub-
contractor for Albion's
first court house.


Charles Simon

Charles Simon
Swan Township,
fruit farmer,
Civil War soldier


F. C. Fuller

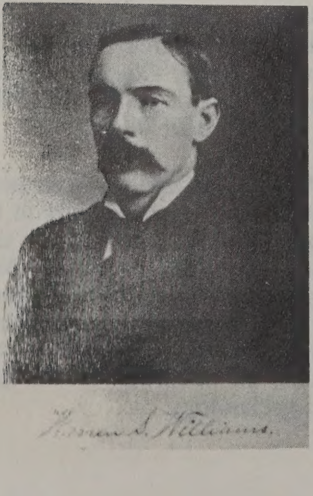
Finley C. Fuller
York Township, farmer


D. C. Walling

D. C. Walling
Kendallville, indus-
trialist, with Hildreth
and Flint started
Flint and Walling

Frank P. Wood

Franklin P. Wood
Perry Township, farmer


Warren S. Williams

Dr. Warren S. Williams
Kendallville, physician,
father and grandfather
of other physicians and
surgeons.

Historic Houses and Scenes in Noble County

Old houses are extremely interesting to many people, some from an architectural standpoint, others, from history, and some from a nostalgic love of old things. Noble County does not lack homes of more than a hundred years old, and does not lack homes of real architectural beauty. Some of these are being shown on these two pages.

On the left from top to bottom: Gene Stratton-Porter Memorial home, Rome City; Stone's Trace Tavern, Road 5 south of Road 33; Home in Wolf Lake; School house or county infirmary—both tales are told to the writer; Town Hall, Avilla.

On the right from top to bottom: Raft in lake at Chain O' Lakes State Park; Marker near Merriam at site of Joel Bristol's home, the first white settler in Noble County; The first brick house in Noble County, near Stone's Trace Tavern; House north edge of Wolf Lake, Road 33.

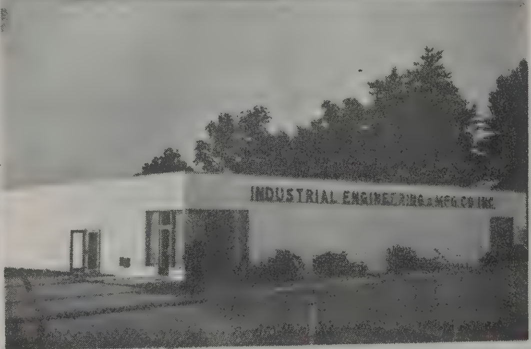
(continued on page 92)

Present Industry in Noble County

While the early settlers of Noble County earned their living by farming, it was not long until grist mills, saw mills and woolen mills began operating.

About the mid 1800's, however, other industry sprang up and with the transportation supplied by the railroads, it flourished.

Here are some of today's factories, just a small portion of the nearly 40 now operating in the county and employing nearly six thousand men and women.



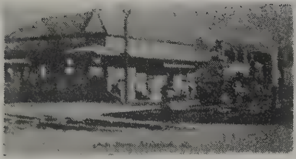
PURITAN ICE CREAM

Column One: Sorg Products, Ligonier; Flint and Walling, Kendallville; Lyall Electric, Albion; Kendallville Foundry, Kendallville; McCray Refrigerators, Kendallville. Column Two: Monsanto, Ligonier; Kraft Foods, Kendallville; Newman Foundry, Kendallville; Industrial Engineering and Manufacturing Co., Brimfield; Puritan Ice Cream, Kendallville.

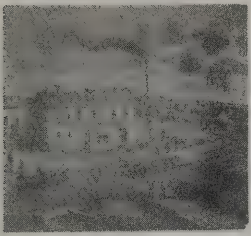
Early Industry in Noble County

The first industry in the county was that of milling, so many grist mills were established, particularly where there was water power. The second industry was that of lumber, hence the great number of saw and planing mills.

The third industry of which there is no remnant left in the county was that of woolen mills. Since 1850 the growth of industry in the county has been almost phenomenal.



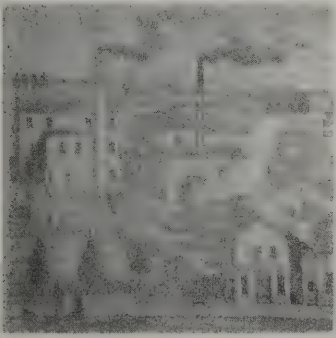
Union Station, Kendallville



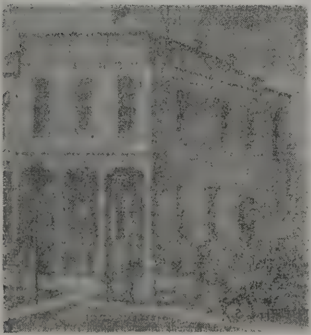
Planing Mill, Randolph Bros., Ligonier

Carriage Works, J.W.F. Curry, Albion

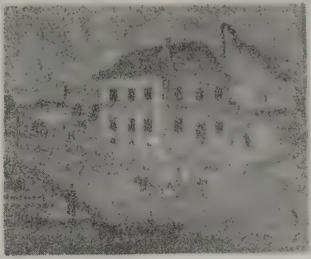
Res. W.H. Gerver, Elkhart Twp.



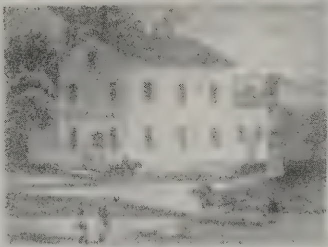
Sash, Door and Blind, Reed and Hill, Kendallville



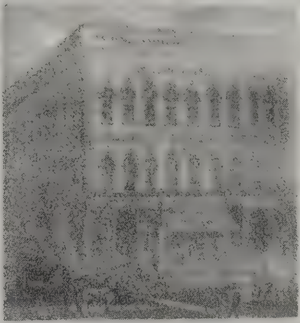
Standard Printing, and Post Office Kendallville



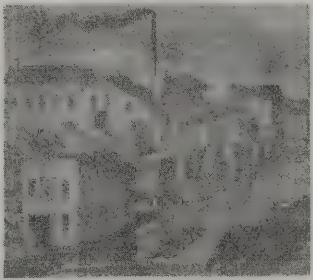
Grist and Sawmill, Ellis and Mummert, Wawaka



Grist Mill Willits. Bros., Noble Twp.

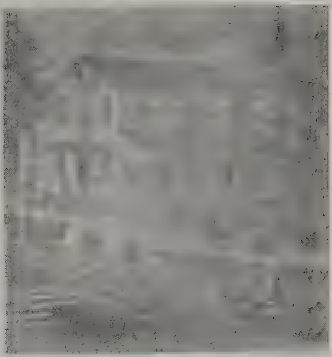


Mitchell Hall, Kendallville

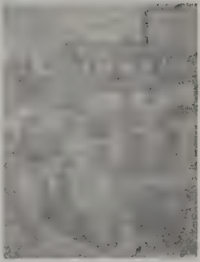


Deible Planing Mill, Kendallville

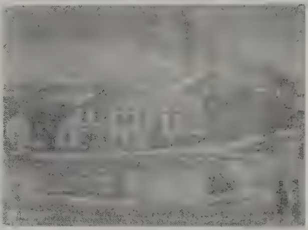
B. & R. Cigar Store and Factory, Kendallville



Grove Mill, Brillhart Bros.



Singrey and Eby, Planing Mill, Albion



Flint and Walling, Kendallville

Res. H.C. Stanley, Green Twp.

Plough Works, Gerber, Treash and Kriegbaum, Ligonier

Noble Co. Courthouse, Albion

Not so Noble County. Dig as the historian will, his spade exposes only the bedrock of all the Joel Bristols who in their quiet measure helped form the nation's foundation, even today. In Noble County there are no unusual strata on which the historian can spectacularly dwell, but Noble County is no less a fragment of that which has made America great.

Joel Bristol was not alone when he reached this area. It is recorded that he was accompanied by his wife and six orphaned children of Mrs. Bristol's sister. Apparently Bristol prospered, for in 1849—22 years after he invaded the territory—Joel commissioned a surveyor to "lay out" a village in Noble Township. He called it Nobleville and on paper it was a hamlet of forty-two lots, each measuring a quarter-acre and fronting on streets sixty-six feet wide. Nobleville, however, failed to survive the whims of settlers and it was added to the growing catalog of villages "laid out" by surveyors but never showing a profit for these forerunners of today's real estate adventurers. Nobleville is said to have had a grocery, a few houses and, of course, the ubiquitous saloon, but nonetheless it faded into the countryside, designated on the Noble Township map as the southwest quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 25.

Bristol's history-making party of eight members had few immediate neighbors, with the nearest some six miles to the south. On the north, settlers had filtered into what is now the Benton community in Elkhart County, about 25 miles away. Otherwise, Joel and his family were alone in the wilderness, aside from Indians who have been described as "somewhat numerous and friendly, though arrant thieves and beggars."

At this point, but at the risk of sullying an otherwise unblemished name, it might be observed that Bristol apparently had at least one weakness. He is said to have sold whiskey to the red man, approaching a capital crime on the frontier. It is not recorded that Joel himself was a devotee of the bottle, but presumably he was not.

Nine years after Bristol and his brood arrived on the scene, Joel became a county commissioner in an election marking organization of Noble County in 1836.

Bristol was chosen a commissioner along with Henry Hostetter, Sr., and Abraham Pancake, surnames that survive to this day in the area. This, plus the fact that he later became a real estate operator, would indicate that Bristol led a respectable, busy life on the frontier.

Bristol's grave is somewhere near a wild cherry tree on land he once occupied more than 125 years ago. When he died, he couldn't have known that his name today stands first on the roll call of Noble County's first, courageous pioneers.

II

In December of 1815, the last territorial legislature was convened at Corydon. It was then that legislators petitioned the United States Congress for authority to adopt a constitution and maintain a state government. When Indiana was admitted as a state less than a year later, all of the northeastern section was a part of Knox County, with downstate Vincennes the county seat. Some five years later, further realignment placed this area in Allen County, having Fort Wayne as its seat of government. Next, in 1832, the County of LaGrange was created by the General Assembly, with what is now Noble County a part of that political division, having its county seat at Lima.

If this is puzzling to today's reader, it must have been more so to what few settlers there were in Northeastern Indiana more than a century ago. There is more than an even chance, however, that the vanguard of pioneers was not particularly concerned with his early juggling of county boundaries as it wrestled more with the wilderness than it did with county seats. This would soon change, however, with the organization of Noble County.

An act of the State Legislature created the County of Noble in 1836 and in June of that year what few voters there were (probably less than 75) cast their ballots for such candidates as Isaac Spencer, James Hostetter, Elisha Blackman and James Latta. Spencer became clerk and recorder, James Hostetter the sheriff and Blackman and Latta, associate judges. Bristol, another Hostetter and Pancake were commissioners, as earlier noted.

With death the reality that it is, settlers of the new county wisely named a coroner to tidy up legal details attending one's departure. Thus, the county's first coroner was one Henry Engle.

To further confuse the early political emergence of Noble County, it appears that in 1833 there was a township unit called Perry, a name preserved to this day. It was settled some three years earlier by Levi Perry, Isaish Dungan and Richard Stone, who called it "Perry's Prairie." In any case, in 1833 the township elected Jacob Wolf as justice of the peace, the first office to be occupied in what soon was to become Noble County. In a real sense, then, Noble County had Perry Township before there was, in fact, a Noble County.

It is only coincidence that a historical society this sesquicentennial year of 1966 has dedicated a "tavern" it has restored not far south of Perry Township's Ligonier at the junction of two modern highways. The building was once that of Richard Stone, a settler who in 1839 erected what was to become a major focal point for pioneers who seemed to prefer the western rather than the eastern section of the new county. To be sure, the society maintains Stone's Tavern which was "the very center of the beginning of the county..."

If this is the case, as today's Stone's Trace Historical Society says it is, the tavern and its researchers become a significant source for studious reflection upon the infant county.

Stone has been pinpointed precisely as the "fourth settler" arriving in Noble County in 1831. His "tavern" business had its beginning, it is said, in a double log cabin on Stone's 160 acres traversed by the old Goshen-

Fort Wayne trail. Business was good, so in 1839 he built the two-story structure only recently restored and dedicated.

Since Stone's Tavern also served as a court house, a post office, a jail and a school house, it can be seen that it deserved the description as being the county's "most pretentious building" in the 1840's and early 1850's.

The tavern sat along two converging early trails, one of them possibly laid out by General Anthony Wayne as he more or less followed a still-earlier Miami Indian trail. This would be what modern motorists know as U.S. Highway No. 33. The other trail, known then as the White Pigeon Road and also pursuing an Indian thoroughfare, is today's Indiana Highway No. 5. Situated as it was at the intersection of two trails, the tavern was bound to prosper.

It is likely that Stone entertained persons of frontier prominence since his tavern was one of the few such enterprises along the sixty-mile trail from Fort Wayne to Goshen, and the one to White Pigeon. One of these may have been an early governor, Samuel Bigger, who is held by anecdote as one who danced and slept in Stone's hostelry.

Stone is believed to have operated the tavern until early 1860 when he sold it to Isaac Glass. It is not known whether Glass continued to use the "pretentious" building as a refuge for wayfarers. It may have been about this time that deterioration set in, finally leaving it in the shambles that the historical society found it in 1964. Today, restored, the tavern vividly reflects the Noble County of another, distant year.

Upon its organization in 1836, Noble County measured 18 miles north to south and 24 miles east to west, covering 432 square miles. The newly-elected county commissioners divided the area into civil townships, gave them their present names and began thinking about a county seat of government. Each township was six miles square, with exception of Jefferson and York. These yielded two sections each in contributing to the creation of Albion Township.

Noble County kept these early dimensions until about 1860 when citizens in lower Washington Township decided that Columbia City in Whitley County could more conveniently serve them as a county seat. Noble County commissioners saw their point, studied their petition, and finally ordered the south third of Washington Township to Whitley County. This reduced Noble County's square mileage to 420, a decline of 12 square miles. So it remains today.

The secession was bloodless, of course, but the residents involved campaigned for two years for and against the switch in county loyalty. As one observer described it, "Petitions were circulated, speeches made, and opponents to the change were almost driven out of the territory."

Noble County in 1836 was pictured as "almost covered with lakes and swamps, and was a wild fastness almost equal to a jungle." Nonetheless, the county had to have a county seat. The decision on its location became the responsibility of three commissioners named by the Legislature in March of 1836. So it was that these commissioners, George A. Fate, R. McDonald and Eli Penwell, became the first of a long line of officials who for ten years failed in their mission to establish a permanent seat of county government. It could be that this is an unenviable record unmatched anywhere in Indiana.

No doubt in good conscience, these commissioners in May of 1836 pinpointed for the halls of justice "Section 24, in Township numbered 34 North, of Range numbered 8 East, in said county, on the land of Isaac Spencer and Reuben Jackson Dawson." This was in what was to become Sparta Township, along the Fort Wayne-Goshen trail.

The commissioners of 1836 very likely selected Sparta because it was close to the population center of the day. While they may have been dedicated to the task of "permanently locating" the county seat, with which they were charged, it appears their choice failed to recognize that parochial jealousies would soon waste their efforts.

Fate, McDonald and Penwell may have chafed, but it is true that a courthouse never was built in Sparta, though the county's first court is said to have been convened in the township. Less than a year after the commissioners designated Sparta, petitioners appealed to the Legislature for relocation of the county seat. Thus a second contingent of county seat experts sat in grave conference to evaluate the offers of other ambitious settlements. These commissioners were, or should have been, impartial referees since they came from Elkhart, Cass, Allen, Miami, LaPorte and Henry counties.

In July of 1837, the arbiters met in Wolf Lake, there to appraise the claims of such hamlets as Wolf Lake itself, along with Augusta, Port Mitchell, Van Buren, and a still hoepful Sparta. It must be admitted that the commissioners had little choice, since Van Buren, for example, existed only on paper. The others could claim, for the most part, little more than a cabin or two. With the exception of Wolf Lake, they have long since surrendered to the ages.

In any event, the commissioners erred again, though in innocence. They agreed that Augusta, a village in York Township some two miles west of what is now Albion, would serve forever the area's need for a county seat. "Forever," as it developed, was about six years.

It is strange that history accords Augusta a physical stature that has left little or no evidence today. It is recorded that county officers moved into a new courthouse in Augusta, that a jail was built, and that two hotels, several stores and shops, along with "one or two" churches, mushroomed in the wilderness after the commissioners selected the village as the county seat. It is difficult to imagine two hotels in Augusta, newly platted as it was and hardly a busy thoroughfare for travelers. The explanation, of course, lies in the fact that a "hotel" in Augusta in the 1830's most likely was a cabin with an extra room or two.

Augusta was "laid out," as a surveyor would call it, by four real estate adventurers named W. M. Holmes, George P. Whitaker, Thomas Gale and D. H. Colerick. It consisted of thirty-eight blocks, most of them embracing eight lots, and with four lots donated by the proprietors for school or church purposes. Holmes and his fellow promoters conferred with the out-of-county commissioners about the prospect of naming Augusta the seat of government. The prospect became bright indeed when the village proprietors volunteered to pay $4,000 against the cost of building the courthouse. Apparently driving a hard bargain, commissioners also exacted the promise of a free five acres for a graveyard within one mile of Augusta, one acre for a seminary, one lot for a market house and one square for the courthouse. So the deal was made and Augusta in 1837 was named the county seat.

"A number of industries sprang up," it is recorded, after the commissioners were beguiled by Augusta's proprietors to drive the stake for the courthouse. Boasting hotels, shops and churches, Augusta's future as viable community seemed assured and by 1843 its population was some 200.

Disaster struck in March of 1843 as Augusta reached its zenith. The courthouse caught fire and, as frequently was the case in those distant days, buildings burned to the ground. With it burned the records of the auditor and the treasurer, a turn of events that is felt to this day as the county was robbed of a fund of early documentation.

Historians fairly close to the time and the scene suggust, in fact clearly allege, that a brigand from a neighboring community, put the courthouse to the torch. If his aim was to ruin Augusta, his mission was an illustrious success.

The razing of the courthouse, of course, reopened the issue of "permanently" locating a county seat. Quick to assess the situation were Samuel Hanna and William F. Engle, who in May of 1838 had platted Port Mitchell, situated on the east half of the northeast quarter of Section 36. Port Mitchell boasted thirty blocks of eight lots each, as Hanna and Engle were anxious to point out to still more commissioners who were named by the Indiana Legislature to relocate the seat of government. They agreed to meet part of the expense of building a new courthouse, along with donating lots for schools and churches. Listening with interest were the new commissioners, Charles W. Heaton of St. Joseph County; Lot Day, also of St. Joseph; Ephriam Seeley, of LaGrange County, and John Jackson and Allen Tibbetts, of Elkhart County. They had been appointed by the Legislature on January [illegible] 1844, probably with some irritation over Noble County's inability to accept as final the location for seat of justice.

Ironically and no doubt with annoyance to townsfolk, the commissioners met in Augusta on March 4, 1844, and decided that the Port Mitchell of Hanna and Engle would ideally serve the new county. So the stake was driven again, this time at Port Mitchell as Noble County had its third county seat in some eight years.

When someone fired the courthouse in Augusta the year before, that village could count about 200 citizens, but with destruction of the building and its records and the subsequent appointment of Port Mitchell, half of them moved to the latter hamlet and by 1850 Augusta had all but lost its identity.

Port Mitchell, perhaps smug and glowing in its new status, began to prosper to the degree that Hanna and Engle hoped that it would. "Here brick offices were built and a temporary building erected for a courthouse," it was written. "The people of Port Mitchell were happy; visions of the coming greatness of their town floated before them, lots went off like hot cakes, county officials arrived with weighty volumes, and there was an in-rush of merchants, artisans and professional men." Like Augusta, however, Port Mitchell was living in a dream, even though its selection as the county seat boomed its population beyond that of Augusta.

"In the midst of this jubilation, however, they forgot what the experience of their neightbors should have reminded them of, that the county seat was a moveable institution, and that neither a 'permanent' location nor a driven stake could hold it," it was said.

As early as 1845, about a year after Port Mitchell's selectin as the county seat, envious communities within the county began a movement to appeal to the Legislature for still another relocation, but this time by a vote of the people. Of the appointment of Port Mitchell, it was written, "The property owners at Augusta were indignant, and the inhabitants of other settlements jealous..."

So it was that Noble County residents who had been denied the stature of a county seat petitioned the Legislature for an act permitting a popular election to determine for all time the location of a county seat. Lobbying, apparently, is nothing new, for "wires were pulled" in 1845 to provide for a vote, according to a chronicler not too far removed from the day.

An act authorizing the election won approval of the legislature and in April of 1846 voters went to the polls with the simple instructions to indicate on a ballot their preference of a location. Familiar and unfamiliar names were in the running, among them Port Mitchell, Augusta, Rochester, Ligonier, Springfield, Lisbon, Northport and Wolf Lake. There also was a village known only as "the Center," which up to the time had only been a dark horse in the race. The "Center" was Albion, as it is known today, and it was aptly named because it had sprouted in the geographic center of the county.

Under terms of the legislative act, another election in June of 1846 would have the three top April winners as candidates, and the following August, the top two. The first time around, Port Mitchell, Augusta and the "Center" were nominated. In June, Port Mitchell won over Augusta by a slim two votes, leaving the "Center" and Port Mitchell in the final balloting in August. The "Center" was the eventual winner and, ultimately renamed Albion, it has since and very likely always will be the seat of Noble County's civil government.

III

Albion's roots in history date back to about 1846 the same year in which voters determined it to be the county seat. This year, in any case, is recorded as that when it was "surveyed and mapped." Its early strides were mighty ones, if only because it was named the county seat.

The first courthouse in Albion was completed in 1847, at a cost of $4,045 and with an intrepid man, Elijah Coats, securing the cupola at a height of eighty-four feet. County records, what there were left after the Augusta fire and after the awful indecision about location of the county seat, were moved into the new building September 16, 1847. At about the same time, a jail was built at a cost of $1,300.

Twelve years later, in 1859, the clerk's office caught fire and but few records were spared as the building went the way of so many others when such misfortune struck in the pre-fire hydrant days. County commissioners ordered that the next courthouse be constructed of brick and made fire-proof, and so it was when the contractors, George Harvey & Son, completed a new one in 1861 at a fabulous cost of $11,000. It was of brick and it was fire-proof, but commissioners of 1859 did not anticipate that Noble County's legal business would grow to the point that their $11,000 courthouse could no longer accommodate it. In 1887 another panel of commissioners condemned the building and two years later another had taken its place. This is the courthouse that today stands, seemingly indestructible, in Albion. Its cost, $113,000, as quoted by the builders, Malone Brothers, of Toledo, Ohio.

Earlier, in 1876, a county jail, described as "safe, handsome and convenient", was built near the courthouse. This is the one that only today is being replaced, but at a cost approaching $350,000, compared to $27,000 ninety years ago.

As a footnote to this bit of history, when Albion's first courthouse burned, the surviving records were moved to the building of Levi Thomas on East Main Street in Albion, and for a time court was held in the Lutheran Church on North Orange Street.

Resplendent as it was with a courthouse and with its county seat status symbol, Albion was not without its critics. In 1850, the Albion Observer noted, "Our village is infested with hogs and overrun with cattle and horses that roam at pleasure through the streets and take their nightly rendezvous upon the public

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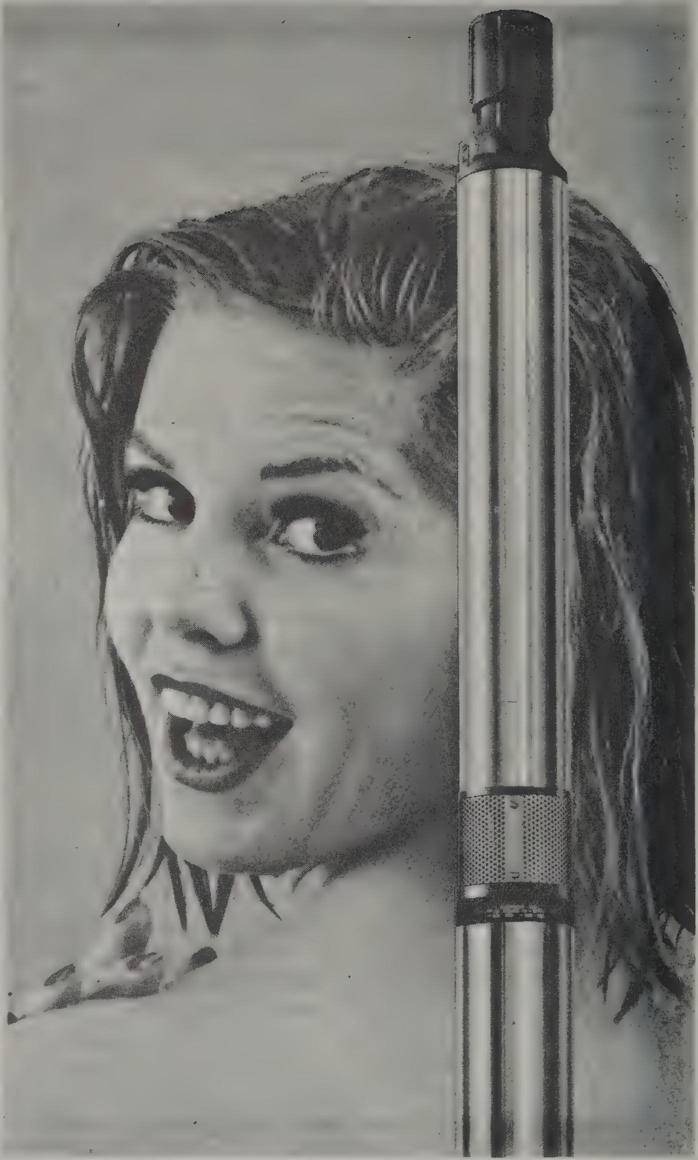

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square." It was not uncommon in those days, however, for the local editor to chastise his own community in scathing and sometimes profane terms.

Albion has long been linked with jurisprudence, although the first court was convened in the home of Adam Engle in Sparta Township not long after Noble County was organized in 1836. Samuel C. Sample, a jurist from South Bend, was dispatched to the county to set judicial machinery in motion and this he did in the Engle house. A grand jury conducted the county's first courtroom business, including the return of two indictments, one charging assault and battery and the other accusing two persons of larceny in the theft of some hogs. Principals in the larceny case, tried a year after they were indicted, escaped the justice they apparently deserved. The escape, according to one observer, was due to the "eloquence" of the defendants' legal counsel, named David H. Colerick, "who was an expert in the art of working on the feelings of a jury, having a fount of tears ready at command whenever he thought the situation required it." The names of the defendants accused of hog stealing have somehow been overlooked by history, but in the case of assault and battery it was one Hugh Allison whose name has been enshrined, though in a negative sense of the word. Perhaps as it should have been, Allison was found not guilty, whereupon he "treated the court, judge and attorneys."

The first court in Noble County to lead more than an ephemeral life was called a "Probate Court", which dealt with legal business relating to the probate of wills and testaments. Noble County had no circuit court of its own, such as it does today, since several counties were served by a single court in which a judge and lawyers moved from one county to another to administer justice.

The Probate Court, however, was active until 1852 when the State Legislature transferred its jurisdiction to the "Court of Common Pleas." The latter court was dissolved in 1873, with its jurisdiction going to the Circuit Court. In the case of the Probate Court in Noble County, the presiding judge did not have to be a member of the bar, though he needed a certificate from a Supreme Court or Circuit Court judge showing that he had "some knowledge of law, together with a clear, logical mind." The first probate judge in the county was Henry R. Burnham, elected in 1836 and serving for 15 years.

In 1873, by an act of Legislature, Noble County became a part of the Thirty-fifth Judicial Circuit, which also included DeKalb and Steuben counties, and 16 years later the circuit was reorganized into the Thirty-third Circuit, including Noble and Whitley counties. Still later and well within recent memory, Noble County was given its own circuit court, as was Whitley, and so it remains today.

Judges during Noble County's early years often were not of august demeanor. An example would be John W. Wright, who served prior to 1852. It is written that "Jack", as he was affectionately called, "was of a social and affable disposition, but always maintained the dignity of his profession and never suffered undue familiarity in court." There was at least one departure from dignity on the part of Judge Wright, however, as recounted by an authority not too far removed from the scene.

"At a session of the court a blackleg (local name for an outlaw) bought a horse of Charles Murray and paid for it in counterfeit coin. The news spread and a squad was organized for pursuit. The judge adjourned court, mounted his Indian pony and joined in the chase, which lasted all night. The Elkhart River was forded several times, there being no bridges, and "Jack" was with the foremost. The counterfeiter was captured, his case given to the grand jury, and the judge was ready to try the case."

IV

Modern Highways today stream through Noble County, railways stretch their track from border to border, and overhead jet planes hurdle the county in less than a minute. It was not always so, of course, and the examination of transportation, its dreams and difficulties, is a revealing commentary on the development of Noble County over the years.

It is somewhat taxing today to imagine a long-gone year in which a canal was to be picked and shoveled across the county as part of a massive state transportation system. An "Internal Improvement Bill", passed by the State Legislature at its 1836-37 session, provided for construction of various canals, including one from Fort Wayne to Michigan City which was to pass through the townships of Swan, Green, York and Perry before joining the Elkhart River in Elkhart Township.

The Fort Wayne-Michigan City canal called for reservoirs and feeders, with the ambitious project earmarked for Northport, near what is now Rome City, along with others at now-vanished Rochester in Perry Township, and in Green Township. It was near Northport, a settlement "laid out" but never developing, that the proposed canal has left its mark in the form of Sylvan Lake, once known as the Rome City Reservoir. A dam built in 1837 created the resort lake as it is to be seen today, but at the time it was part of the canal fantasy as it spread over some 12,000 acres to a depth of 25 to 30 feet after capturing three or four small lakes in the area.

The Noble County canal was soon broken in spirit. Engineers without doubt argued for its practicality, but the state found the cost prohibitive and the project was abandoned. It didn't help, either, that the Northport dam burst three times, the first in 1839 before work was completed. In 1844, it broke again and three persons were drowned. The third break came in 1855.

While canals provide historic backdrops in other Hoosier communities, the Noble County project was never realized despite the state's preoccupation with binding its communities in a workable, profitable communication network.

Before Noble County was organized in 1836, surveyors charted two roads in the area upon direction of the State Legislature. The Fort Wayne-Goshen Road, along with the Fort Wayne-Lima Road, took travelers through the east and west sides of the county and as early as 1832 they carried traffic. What may have been "roads" in the 1830's would be something less than that today. As described by one observer, they were "mere winding paths through the woods, twisting around the higher lands, and abounding in mud holes so deep that the early settlers used to say they went through to China." Enterprising but profiteering settlers along the way charged up to a dollar for pulling hapless wagons from the mud with a team of horses or oxen.

A third road in the county is believed to have been one branching from the Goshen Road north of Cromwell and heading north through what is now Ligonier toward the Michigan state line.

With farm produce moving toward Fort Wayne for outlet at the Wabash & Erie Canal, Fort Wayne merchants and other businessmen along the Mongoquinon (or Lima) Road saw, or believed they saw, that a plank road would not only speed travel but also profit its promoters who would form a stock-selling corporation. So it was that a road of timbers was laboriously laid from north to south. Sturdy pioneers of these long-gone days had to be shrewd to stay alive, but it would seem sometimes that to be shrewd did not necessarily mean to be farsighted. Thus it is recorded: "For three years, travel on this road was splendid, but when the plank began to decay it became worse than no road. Stockholders saw it was a failure and it soon was abandoned entirely."

As one historian put it, "A few small dividends were struck, but the road failed to repay the stockholders for the outlay of construction, and the stock steadily depreciated in value. Many of the largest stockholders at Fort Wayne and along the road were wise enough to get rid of the stock to Eastern capitalists, upon whom much of the burden of failure fell when the enterprise collapsed. Toll was collected on portions of the road until about 1858, when the route was turned over to the county commissioners."

The plank road is said to have been conceived in about 1847, with capital stock of some $70,000 backing the project. A writer who quite likely saw the construction said, "Pursuant to the law of the state, this road was leased by the company for a term of years, and saw mills were erected all along the line to furnish three-inch oak plank, which was to be laid down on suitable sills, at right angles to the direction of the road. The planks were sawed and laid down in 1847 or 1848, and tollgates were established from six to ten miles apart, and superintendents of sections, living along the line, were employed to keep the road in repair. The plank road was fifty miles long and in some places deviated from the old Lima Road."

Tax-sensitive citizens of today may find small comfort in the fact that even in the 1840's Noble County residents faced levies for road building. Prior to about 1844, roads were constructed at state expense

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providing they traversed more than a single county. After 1844, counties were required to hew their own roads and citizens were belabored by taxation to pay for them. It is doubtful they got much for their money, particularly when the road crossed a stream. "The rude log bridges which spanned the narrow streams and rivulets were usually swept away with every freshet," one observer said. He added, "...long stretches of swampy road were corduroyed with rails, logs and brush."

Road building, particularly railway building, had its hazards and not the least of them developed at Albion when in 1873-74 the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad discovered an underground lake. Attempting to fill a swamp west of York Street, Baltimore & Ohio laborers encountered a subterranean body of water that defied their efforts to fill the area with earth. The battle went on for six months and features of the region began to shrink as the lake, disturbed as it was, gulped down hill after hill. But filling continued week after frustrating week until at long last the lake was conquered.

No one alive today can substantiate this story as an eye-witness, but truth, as elusive as it often is, may be found in the observation of a writer who years ago wrote in longhand: "The existence of the lake was plainly proved by the fact that when the little ponds of water appeared on the surface in the morning, myriads of small minnow-like fishes desported themselves in the released water. The iris of these fish was enclosed in a semi-transparent membrane, which must have rendered them at least partly blind."

V

Railroad history in Noble County dates back to the 1830's when John B. Chapman, of Warsaw, introduced a bill for the incorporation of the "Atlantic and Pacific Railroad," a title that was soon to be modified to the "Buffalo & Mississippi Railroad" since the former name evoked ridicule by Chapman's fellow legislators.

Work on the "Buffalo & Mississippi" was begun (not in Noble County) as early as 1835, but it was suspended two years later during a financial recession and for ten years it languished on the drawing board. Construction was then resumed under the name of "Northern Railroad," and in 1855 it was consolidated with the Michigan Southern Railroad. Two years later its rails threaded their way through Noble County as the Michigan Southern & Northern Railroad.

The Michigan Southern & Northern Indiana, already the creature of consolidation, was in turn merged with three others as each fought for fiscal responsibility. This merger, in 1869, was a nightmare of legal documentation involving the Michigan Southern & Northern Indiana with the Cleveland & Toledo, the Buffalo & Erie and the Cleveland, Painsville & Ashtabula. These formed the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Railway, the immediate forerunner of the New York Central System. Railroad consolidation has still not run its full course, since even in this sesquicentennial year the New York Central has been wedded to the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, creating a corporate giant of which

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Noble County has been a part, in a sense, for more than one hundred and thirty years.

Routing of the road through Kendallville meant the decline of Lisbon, a village to the south of that settlement. When in about 1852 it became clear that a railroad, little matter what the name, would pass through Kendallville instead of Lisbon, the latter settlement collapsed while the former grew.

Before the onset of Lisbon's decline, a visitor was "surprised to find quite a collection of houses, frame houses at that and good-sized, including a good hotel, two or three stores, an ashery and potash factory, a wagon shop, and some other evidence of business." Kendallville to the north, however, still with no assurance that a railroad would be built through it, was a poor, struggling neighbor and with contempt was known as "Mitchell's Farm" among the ambitious citizens of Lisbon. The reference to "Mitchell" was inspired by William Mitchell, the man who not too many years before had platted the village.

It is ironic that in this sesquicentennial year Lisbon, though unincorporated, can point to a larger population than that existing more than a century ago when its residents felt the settlement faced a future as bright as claimed by an in Noble County. Today's Lisbon is peopled by transplanted families who deserted their native Kentucky and West Virginia coal fields for a better, certainly more profitable, life in Northern Indiana.

In any case, Lisbon of years ago practically perished while Kendallville and its railroad began to flourish, if such a description is appropriate for the year 1852 when a hamlet of some 75 souls increased to "over 300" under the stimulus of improved transportation facilities.

At roughly the same time, another railroad was given birth in the minds of investors. This was the "Grand Rapids & Indiana," a north-south route having articles of incorporation dating back to 1854 and, three years later, listing capital stock of nearly $3 million. This, apparently, was on paper only, since "the paid-up capital of the company was so small that it was found impossible to meet the expense of constructing the road..."

With the aid of eastern interests, however, the railroad finally was built and for years was known in Noble County as the "G. R. & I." until its eventual assimilation by the Pennsylvania Railroad. The line to this day, like the intersecting New York Central (or Pennsylvania-Central, if you will) is a money-making arterial for north or southbound freight.

The field was indeed crowded these early years. In the 1870's, the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad solicited funds to help that industry lay its rails west through the county. Citizens of Allen, Jefferson, Albion, York and Sparta townships voted $13,049.50 toward the B. & O. fund, using the argument that their produce shipped directly to the eastern seaboard meant higher prices. The railroad was built and today is a transportation giant.

Then there was the Chicago & Canada Southern Railway Company which sometime before 1872 claimed it would thread its rails through the northern section of Noble County if prospective patrons would support their interest with hard cash. The issue faced a test in the ballot box, but only Wayne and Perry township voters favored the investment. Wayne's assessment to be $20,500 and Perry's, $19,000, but only $1,000 was paid by the railroad zealots. The deal, of course, fell through.

Electric railroading in Noble County was on the transportation scene from about 1906 to early 1937 when it succumbed to modern cars, trucks and highway systems. The swift, silent cars took many county residents to Fort Wayne and beyond from its Kendallville terminal, but survival in a brutally competitive arena was a challenge that could not be met.

It remains for the old "G. R. & I.," however, to provide what might well be the most colorful, complicated and captivating parcel of Noble County history, and to make it even more so, it deals with "culture." The Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad Company wasn't interested in culture, as such, but it was keenly aware it was money in the bank if promotion of it along the way would attract fare-paying customers.

"Island Park Assembly", as Rome City's cultural center was called, appears to have had its beginning in 1878 when a Lima man and a Methodist minister from Sturgis, Michigan, were discussing the spiritual advantages, or lack of them, in the community. It was suggested that Rome City, with its man-made but beautiful Sylvan Lake, might be an appropriate site for a meeting of "Christian men" interested in a "Sunday School gathering." This within weeks led to formation of "The Rome City Inter-Denominational Sunday School Congress." A year later, following several sessions of "Congress", a corporation was created under an act of the Indiana General Assembly permitting organization of institutions "in the interest of religious and general education, and for literary and scientific purposes." So it was that a corporation named "Island Park Assembly" was formed at Rome City.

Millard Fillmore Owen, the Grand Rapids & Indiana's agent at the Rome City station from 1874 until his retirement in 1921, was close to the scene and immediately recognized that "Island Park Assembly" might be tied into a thriving passenger windfall for his railroad. Owen relayed his inspiration to the G. R. & I., which in turn authorized him to "make such improvements as he deemed advisable and profitable."

Under terms of a contract dated in 1880, according to Owen, "sessions of Island Park Assembly were made possible with the very complete accommodations for its patrons during its years of existence through a liberal agreement with the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railway Company, which had leased, or practically owned, the island and grounds adjacent."

The G. R. & I., Owen wrote, "erected a tabernacle for the use of the Assembly, also a model building and other halls which it placed at the disposal of the association." Too, it had interests in a boarding house, dining hall and restaurants.

The Assembly, also known as the "Western Chautauqua", drew such national figures as William Jennings Bryan as speakers. Bryan commanded a $500 fee for an afternoon address, but the railroad did even better. Typical of such an occasion, the G. R. & I. handled "eight or nine foreign road special excursion trains in for the day and all were crowded." Bryan, it was estimated, drew 20,000 persons to the Park that afternoon in 1899. A few years earlier, the railroad ran many other specials into Rome City with the appearance of The Reverend Sam Jones, considered the Billy Graham of the 1880's. This was in 1886 and it was figured that the G. R. & I. hauled some 8,000 passengers into Rome City.

According to Agent Owen, "Private parties and societies were given extra inducements to run excursions to the Assembly, and these were frequent and large. Societies and churches all over Northern Indiana, Western Ohio and Southern Michigan were not slow in making the Assembly excursions one of the annual features of the calendar, and on many dates of the sessions a number of points would be represented by train loads of people. The Railroad Company pledged itself to cooperate with contiguous lines in making the best terms possible to encourage excursion promotion from other roads. Thus it was that nearly every day was a great day at Island Park."

Nonetheless, interest in the Assembly began to decline and by the late 1890's it had done so to the point that deficits appeared in the yearly statement of condition, a turn of events that left the railroad frowning. At the close of the 1896 season the courts ordered a sheriff's sale, whereupon investors with more courage than sound judgment organized a syndicate to buy the park and reorganize it for the 1897 season.

The Grand Rapids & Indiana was not idle. It gave the Assembly a railroad car with which to advertise the fading glory of the chautauqua. "The car was covered with oil cloth, on its sides completely", wrote Owens. "It was painted up in artistic style, carried the date announcements, programs outline, and such other reading as would talk" for the Assembly. Owen continued, "The start was made on the road about the middle of May, traveling the local road from Grand Rapids to Richmond, making all towns of any size on the roads crossing east and west, a distance of from 100 to 150 miles. They were transferred from one stopping point to another by all sorts of train accommodations--local passenger, local freight, the gravel or work train, the special engine, anything that happened to be going their way when they were ready to go and could get orders. From three to five towns a day was about the average."

The fanfare along the G. R. & I. and cooperating railroads indeed helped restore a temporary interest in Island Park. The Assembly of 1897, only a year after a humiliating sheriff's sale, featured one Professor Isaac Cline who brought to the chautauqua grounds a demonstration of the "Cinematograph", a forerunner of the motion picture. "Great crowds" witnessed Professor Cline's demonstrations, to the delight of the G. R. & I. who hauled them there.

William Jennings Bryan made a second appearance in 1901, but the weather held the crowd down and his share of the receipts was $110.55, a figure that left the orator something less than silver-tongued. Bryan is said to have left the Assembly grounds carrying a hand grip he thought was his own, but which belonged to the Assembly's secretary, H. G. Cobbs, who used it to carry the gate receipts. Cobbs sent an urgent wire to Bryan somewhere up the railroad line and Bryan fired back an equally urgent wire: "I've not got the Assembly hand grip, and never wish to visit Island Park Assembly again."

Despite the railroad and its many contributions to the Assembly, for whatever reason, and despite such personalities as Sam Jones, Mr. Bryan and other leading chautauqua performers of the day, the colorful, almost fantastic "Island Park" era was to end in 1901, twenty-six years after its organization. The coup de grace was fired in 1907 when the State Legislature made effective a law which reduced local fares on the railroad to two cents a mile. This in turn made it unprofitable for the G. R. & I. to run excursions into Rome City, even if there had been an attraction equal to the Assembly of another, happier year.

Island Park is a strange by-product of transportation's early adventures in Noble County, but perhaps no more so that the impact on such communities as Lisbon and Kendallville where one town grew because of a railroad and the other declined because it chose another route.

VI

It was in Perry Township, history says, that settlers first purchased land from the government in 1831, with the total listed at 2,120 acres in that year, and by 1836 when Noble County was legally organized, pioneers had purchased a total of 33,048 acres.

Acres of what? A historian not too far distant from the day has described them with an understanding eluding his modern counterpart:

"The first crop planted, if the settler arrived early enough in the season, was corn; if too late for corn, potatoes were planted; still later, turnips. The fall arrivals usually sowed their land with wheat, and were obliged to purchase supplies for the winter from farmers in LaGrange, Elkhart and Kosciusko counties, where a quantity of land already had been cleared. Much hardship was suffered by the late comers who were short of means, as most pioneers were, but the neighbors were helpful, and there is no record of actual starvation.

"A more serious matter was the frequency of disease, for the county abounded in swamps giving rise to fever and ague, from which few of the pioneers were exempt. Physicians were not to be had, and as there were no drug stores, the only resource was to such simple, domestic remedies of which the settlers had knowledge.

"The winter months were devoted to chopping and making preparations for clearing more land in the spring. The frequent log rollings provided social recreation, as also did the occasional dances, where all were on the same social level, equally lacking in wealth or high position, and snobbish jealousies had little room to intrude.

"At that early day, there were, of course, no roads except the wagon tracks marked out by teamsters through the heavily timbered parts of the country. In such places, where the soil was soft, the frequent passage of vehicles soon worked up the ground into a state of mud and mire, when the teamsters would mark out another course. On the openings the soil was more sandy and the tract first marked out was longer used, though it was seldom necessary to keep to it, as the ground on either side was equally available. The burning of the undergrowth by the Indians each spring not only cleared away obstructions, but also gave the settler a wider and more extensive view of the country, uninterrupted except by the larger trees.

"At that time, the oak openings, with the tender grass just spring up and spreading a carpet of green over the landscape, which was further beautified by multitudes of wild flowers, and perhaps in the distance a herd of deer, presented a scene calculated to inspire feelings of delight in every lover of Nature.

"But Nature is not always a kind mistress. The spring of 1838 commenced with heavy rains which continued with little intermission until about the middle of June, after which no more fell during the remainder of the summer and fall. Some wheat sown that fall did not germinate until after snow fell. The intense heat of summer rapidly evaporated the water in the over-filled swamps and marshes, and fever and malaria prostrated practically the entire population.

"Physicians were scarce, and the few who were in the settlements were themselves ill with the prevailing disease. Many of the settlers died, and many lay sick with none to care for them. In one house at Rochester thirteen persons were ill, and there were but two people in the village—Dorus Swift and Miss Achsah Kent—who were able to go from house to house and minister to the suffering, but these two did their duty right nobly. With the coming of autumn frosts the disease was checked and the settlers began to recover, though a few of the old persons had been so enfeebled that they died during the ensuing fall and winter."

Hardships such as these were many as a courageous people invaded this frontier of the late 1820's and 1830's, but the land they cleared was rich and it yielded its treasures when it was turned in the Spring. The county grew and prospered as the land gave of itself when it was kneaded by the plow, when cattle fatted upon its grasses and when trees of even more ancient days rooted firmly in the soil and waited to be felled for hearths and homes.

While artisans and merchants clustered in scattered settlements promoted by real estate speculators of the day, the outlying, individualist pioneer made Noble County an agricultural community that, in a real sense, remains today. The farmer years ago was rugged and he was individual, but it wasn't long before he sensed a need to communicate with others involved in the same struggle. It was from this need that stemmed an interesting institution that may be fading but so far has clung to a tradition dating beck to 1855. This is the county fair.

In that year, 1855, the State Legislature provided that "citizens of a county might institute the necessary conditions for a county fair." Then followed the organization of the "Noble County Agricultural and Horticultural Society", with thirty to forty farmers joining and paying an initiation fee of $1 each. In the fall of the same year, these charter members promoted a fair at the Bassett farm northwest of Albion, complete with premiums for prize farm produce and horse races around a quarter-mile track. Gate receipts were listed at $60.

The Bassett farm was host to the fair about four years, after which it was shifted to a tract of six acres owned by a Mr. Clapp, also near Albion. In 1865 it was voted to remove the fair to Ligonier, over the objection of Albion, to the farm of Harrison Wood, who had offered the agricultural society a tract at no cost for the first year and $30.00 for each subsequent year. The farm of Wood was host to the fair for twelve years, after which it was moved again, this time to about a mile west of Ligonier where stockholders purchased a site of twenty-three acres for $1,700.00. Stockholders rented the land to the fair association and receipts ran about $1,000.00 annually until, in 1883, location of the fair was switched for a last time to Kendallville where, under another name, it has continued to this day. The Kendallville site contains fifty-two acres and in the beginning was leased by the fair association and then purchased. The fair grew in popularity and by 1919 there were no less than 20,000 entries in a multitude of categories.

Where once Noble County was essentially an agricultural community, it is now an industrial area in the sense that more workers are employed in industry than on the farm. This may not have been true in 1916-18 when statiticians painstakingly assembled these figures:

"The total number of farms in Noble County of five acres or over was 2,962; total number of acres in farms, 264,765; acres of land leased or rented, 92,403; acres in permanent pasture, 30,582; acres of timberland, 23,900; acres of wasteland, 3,114; acres in orchards, 3,400; number of silos on farms, 384; cream separators on farms, 1,785.

"The number of acres of wheat harvested in 1917 was 33,339; sown in the fall, 35,176; rye harvested, 2,383; rye sown in the fall, 4,449; corn harvested, 42,203; oats harvested, 21,389; barley harvested, 1,952; buckwheat harvested, 35.

"The number of bearing apple trees was 11,533: peach trees, 3,516: pear trees, 1,196.

"The number of acres of timothy hay harvested in 1917 was 12,806: clover hay, 14,541: alfalfa, 688: white potatoes, 698: onions, 715."

The statitician did not stop there.

"The number of horses on hand, December 31, 1917, was 7,930: horses sold during 1917, 1,529: mules on hand December 31, 1917, 509: mules sold during 1917, 180. The number of milch cows on hand December 31, 1917, was 7,523: all others on hand, 10,143: total number sold in 1917, 6,537: died of disease, 80: average number of quarts of milk per day per cow, 6.9. The total number of hogs on hand December 31, 1917, was 20,982: sold during 1917, 48,870: died of disease, 759. The total number of sheep was 13,205: sold during the year, 10,681: killed by dogs, 140: sheep sheared, 11,045.

"The total number of laying hens in the county was 129,421. There were 280 colonies of bees, giving a total production of honey of 2,590 pounds.

"In 1919, Noble County took the lead over the entire state, according to its population, in the production of potatoes, having a yield of 95 per cent."

VII

It is strange that Noble County was recognized in a wide area for its lawlessness. It is not clear why this should have been, since otherwise its development pursued a quiet, normal course little different than was the case with other counties as the frontier in Northern Indiana yielded to the white man's invasion. Horse thievery, an odious crime in the wilderness, was a common occurence. So was counterfeiting, which seems an unlikely occupation for those days. Banditry appears to have been wholesale and reports of organized gangs are legion.

In the opinion of at least one observer, outlawry thrived because it was "favored by the wild nature of the country." It is rather startling to find that a few pioneers, perhaps some of them revered today for their courage in conquering the wilds, were suspect.

It may or may not have been hysteria, but one commentator said, "The gangs were well organized and had stations at various places where they concealed their stolen property until they had a chance to dispose of it, and in some cases the place of concealment was the house of some apparently respectable citizen and farmer who was himself, unknown to his neighbors, one of the miscreants, or in confederation with them." It seems that those who joined in efforts to break up the gangs were visited by arsonists who burned their barns.

Fifth-column intrigue also takes another twist: "When any public meetings were held to devise measures for putting a stop to the evil, they were attended by some of the outlaws, several of whom took part in

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the proceedings and were the loudest in denouncing the outrages and demanding protection for life and property."

There is no real way of assessing to what extent this is true. Exaggeration may have attached itself to many stories handed down from father to son and the terror in which Noble County was said to have been may have been far less terrifying to the settler himself.

One story, though, is likely true. Still, the proof is largely confined to a single, simple grave marker in the old Northport Cemetery. It identifies the grave's now-dusty occupant as Gregory McDougal, often spelled "McDougle", either of which might be correct. Gregory smacks of the Old West in which justice was administered arbitrarily at the end of a rope, for it was to a similar demise that McDougal was consigned by an unofficial body of jurors.

McDougal's end of the line becomes clear, in hindsight, when Noble County citizens, taking advantage of enabling legislation passed four years earlier, organized several companies of "regulators" dedicated to clearing Noble County of brigands who ravished the countryside. "The members were given the powers and privileges of constables, and were empowered to call for aid upon the regularly constituted officers of the law", it has been recorded.

McDougal was a young man who is said to have admitted stealing thirty-four horses, robbing four stores and two tanneries, breaking two jails, taking the entire loads of two peddlers and passing counterfeit money. Additionally, McDougal stood accused of murdering a woman in Canada.

History holds that McDougal was arrested January 17, 1858, following a parade of "regulators" through the streets of Kendallville. A banner said, "No Expense to the County", as it portrayed a criminal being seized by a posse. Taking part in the parade were representatives of "regulator" companies, among them such Noble County units as the Albion Rangers, Jefferson Regulators, Lisbon Rangers, Noble County Invincibles, Port Mitchell Regulators, Perry Regulators, Swan Regulators, Sparta Guards and Wolf Lake Sharpers.

Six years earlier, companies such as these were, as noted previously, were authorized by Indiana statute. They were to consist of "not less than nor more than one hundred, who were to sign articles of association, giving the name of the company, the name and residence of each member, the organization to be approved by the county commissioners and put on record." It is significant that "regulators" were not to function as a court of justice, a thing to remember when assessing the propriety of McDougal's "trial."

As early as 1841 or 1842, citizens met in Kendallville to "devise means for mutual protection", but nothing was done immediately. It wasn't until 1856, as noted, that the "regulator" agencies began forming and by 1859 it is recorded that no less than thirty-seven companies were meeting in Northern Indiana. It is estimated that in Noble County alone some five hundred men were serving, legally or otherwise, in law enforcement roles.

In any event, McDougal, described as a ringleader, was seized with several others at Rome City in mid-January of 1858. A committee sat as judge and jury, condemning McDougal to death by hanging. His hearing was in Ligonier and the hanging was to take place nearby at Diamond Lake. There is some doubt about the quality of the evidence, particularly that involving McDougal's alleged record of murder in Canada. It may be true that the "Regulators" were anxious to have a proper excuse to hang someone, almost anyone, to end once and for all the lawlessness in the community. It is little wonder, then, that murder in Canada was entirely believable and clearly punishable by execution.

So it was that McDougal, taken to Diamond Lake in a wagon that also is said to have contained his coffin, was hanged. Denial of murder was on his lips, although he confessed other crimes. History records that McDougal spoke at length before the noose was placed around his neck. He admonished his listeners to tread a path of righteousness and then, without further ceremony, was left dangling from a tree limb. His last words were supposed to have been, "I trust in the Lord."

One account gives McDougal's age as a few months past twenty-four, but his headstone, still to be seen in the old Northport Cemetery between Rome City and Wolcottville, proclaims him as having been twenty-seven. His name is engraved as "McGragor McDougle", and with some kindness, the stone simply observes that McDougal "died" on January 26, 1858.

Whatever the merits of the McDougal hanging, his death "produced a profound impression throughout this region" and the "blacklegs", as outlaws were generally known in those days, "scattered in all directions."

There is a record of a "legal" hanging in Noble County, but precise details are missing. A man named John Lechner on May 10, 1840, shot and killed a man named Farley in a drunken dispute over twenty-five cents at a frontier shooting match. Lechner was taken to Goshen for safekeeping in one of the few area jails, then faced trial by a jury. He was found guilty and on November 3, 1840, was hanged with the trappings of legality.

VIII

It may not be proper to conclude a profile of Noble County's formative years with accounts of two sordid affairs, but it can be argued that these, too, are fragments of that which has gone on before and contribute, even perversely, to the triumphs and tragedies that have led to Indiana's sesquicentennial year.

This, then, is Noble County...its midwife the hostile frontier, its nurse the proud descendants of Europe's enslaved, its governess the order and the law wrought through wise consent of the governed, and its godfather the gadfly of human industry that wrenched it from the wilderness.

Joel Bristol and his brood, somehow pinned down by time and circumstance in what was to be Noble County, first felled the trees, turned the earth and platted a village. A score, then hundreds, then thousands picked up his trail and tracked him toward the West and its setting sun, confident that tomorrow it would rise again, brighter, warmer and full of promise.

NOBLE TOWNSHIP

Joel Bristol, said to be Noble County's first white settler, arrived in Noble Township in early 1827 and it is for this reason that more attention is paid to this township than many others. Were it not for Bristol, Noble Township would have a historical background more similar to that of most others in the county. It is similar, but less so because Bristol gives it a measure of distinction.

What, exactly, was Noble Township like when Bristol arrived in 1827 and when, in 1836, the county was organized after a deepening tide of pioneers followed Bristol to Noble and other townships in the county? There is a description fitting Noble Township and so many others in Noble County and other counties across the Northern Indiana of that year:

"Until a garden had been planted and the first vegetables raised, the new immigrant supplied the family larder mainly with the rifle, as deer and other wild game were numerous." This conclusion was drawn by a writer of the 1880's. It is unlikely that he witnessed sharpshooting pioneers himself in Noble Township's 1820's, but there is a good chance he heard first-hand descriptions of those rugged days by men who tamed the wilderness.

"One early settler, Ephraim Marker, is said to have killed more than 100 deer in a single season", the writer continued. "Occasionally also a bear was killed, and its meat utilized. The settlers were often annoyed by wolves, which killed their sheep, but in course of time the rifle thinned their numbers until they practically ceased to be a menace.

"A considerable quantity of meat, as well as furs, was obtained from the Indians, who exchanged the products of the chase for flour, vegetables, ammunition and other of the white man's commodities.

"There was little refinement in the primitive community. Of necessity the people lived close to nature, and among the men, at least, much rough horse-play was indulged in, occasionally resulting in a fight, when the vanquished was expected to treat the victor, whiskey--the exciting cause of most of the differences--also being regarded as a universal remedy, not only for all sorts of diseases, but also for injured feelings and ruffled spirits."

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Indians in Noble Township were described as "numerous and friendly, though arrant thieves and beggars." As observed elsewhere, Bristol, among other things, was a tavern keeper who apparently had no reservations about selling liquor to the Red Man. Bristol joined another early settler, John Hall, in operating a tavern on the Fort Wayne and Goshen Road, but it must be kept in mind that a "tavern" in the 1830's would have little resemblance to those of today. In any case, Bristol and Hall sold whiskey to the Indians "which had the natural result, and when intoxicated the Indians were always a nuisance, and likely to become dangerous." While he might have been potentially dangerous, the Indian of Noble Township caused little trouble, drunk or sober. "No serious cases of violence have been reported", it was written.

Aside from Bristol, Noble Township enjoys another distinction since it is in this township that Noble County's oldest surviving village is located. Wolf Lake was platted in April of 1836, about the same time the county was organized, by Patrick C. Miller and Andrew Stewart. Stewart takes Wolf Lake even farther back in antiquity by having an operating "hotel" in the area as early as 1833.

Miller and Stewart "laid out" seventy-one lots on the Northwest Quarter of Section 9. Two streets were called "Wayne" and "Wolf Lake", each measuring ninety-nine feet in width, with other thoroughfares sixty-six feet wide.

At one time Wolf Lake dreamed of becoming the site of the county seat, but it was nothing more than a dream. Oddly, though, the village grew slowly while others failed. In 1840 the population was listed as six resident families, but six years later this had increased to about twenty-five or thirty families, "with a corresponding increase in the number of business men."

Andrew Stewart, one of the town's founders, maintained a "hotel" in Wolf Lake as early as 1833 and three years later Thomas Shepard opened a tanyard. Thomas Smith, Sr., is recorded as the village's first merchant. A post office was, we are told, established in about 1837, with Patrick C. Miller the first postmaster. Hotels, such as they were, tanyards, stores and a post office contributed to the fact that Wolf Lake outlived such upstarts as Sparta and others.

It is ironic that Wolf Lake, having ambitions as a competitor for the county seat, would long outlive three villages, Sparta, Augusta and Port Mitchell, that actually were county seats for brief periods. Wolf Lake may have been rejected as the seat of county government, but to this day it is still on the map as an unincorporated town while the one-time county seats have long vanished.

Bristol's "Nobleville", as observed edsewhere, joined Port Mitchell, Augusta and Sparta as villages passing into limbo. In fact, Nobleville largely existed only on the drawing board, although history claims that "a few houses were built and a grocery and saloon opened." Nobleville embraced forty-two lots, with "each full lot containing a quarter of an acre, the streets being sixty-six feet wide."

A grist mill erected about 1832 by John Hall was the earliest improvement in the township. A bachelor, Hall earlier carried mail from Fort Wayne to Goshen on the back of an ox. The ox may have had an affable personality, but its rider, Hall, was described as "eccentric" and having a "somewhat irascible disposition." None the less, he is recorded as the township's first producer of flour, a commodity of worth on the frontier. An opportunist, Hall is said to have erected a bridge across his mill stream, just below his dam, and "charged a toll of two shillings for each wagon." Hall's mill is believed to have been in business ten to twelve years before it was abandoned in the wake of a freshet that washed away his dam.

During its first few years of existence, Noble Township, like others in the county, observed the code of "squatter sovereignty", but it was not long until the settlers legally "entered" their land at the federal government land office in Fort Wayne. Fort Wayne was infested by land sharks who "used every effort to defraud immigrants of their money or land, sometimes, it is said, with the connivance of the land agents."

The perils on the frontier, then, also included "land sharks", not only in Noble Township but also elsewhere in Northern Indiana of the 1830's. The "sharks" are long gone, but Wolf Lake and Noble Township live on.

ALBION TOWNSHIP

Albion Township and the Town of Albion are all but indistinguishable since the latter in territory occupies most of the township, perhaps the smallest legal entity of its kind in the United States. For all practical purposes, to trace the history of Albion as a town and as Noble County's seat of government is also tracing the history of Albion Township itself.

The township of Albion is the last to be created in Noble County since it was not until June 4, 1854, that county commissioners decided to give their county seat, then only about eight years old, a township of its own. These officials encroached on Jefferson and York townships for land that encompassed what is now both the town and township of Albion. Sections 18 and 19 of Jefferson Township and Sections 13 and 24 of York Township were ceded in the creation of the new territory, the thirteenth township to be organized since the county was formed eighteen years earlier. Albion Township was only four square miles in area.

In the view of a historian, "The founding of the town of Albion and its rapid growth and promised permanence gave rise to the conditions requiring the creation of Albion Township. It was out of the question for the village to be so divided that the citizens living east of Orange Street must go three miles east to poll their votes, and those on the west side, three miles west."

There is evidence that prior to 1846 there was a settlement of sorts in an area called, simply, the "Center", because of it geographical location in the center of the new county. This is clear if only because the "Center" was in the running as a candidate for the county seat of government. Still, Albion as a village was not platted until 1846. In any case, Albion was the choice of voters when they were asked to select a county sear following a running battle that for ten years raged among proprietors of other villages seeking the honor.

Albion, or the "Center", if one prefers, was the target of abuse when in 1846 it became clear that Albion was a serious contender for the county seat site. Perhaps the tenor of the abuse is best caught in a verse written at the time by Adrian B. Miller, of Ligonier: "To those who are fond of street seclusion, and hate all business and confusion, and, hermit-like, would wean away their hearts from earth to fast and pray--the Center's just the place; for there no merry sound is on the air—no hearty laugh, nor gleesome call, but a stagnant gloom encircles all." Despite Miller and his snide verse, the "Center" was chosen as the seat of government.

In the mid-1840's the village received the name it bears today. Commissioners named a committee, including William M. Clapp, David B. Harriman and William Slack, to select an appropriate designation for the village. One of these had lived in Albion, New York, and the same name was suggested for the Noble County hamlet.

The name "Albion" was not new. The Poet Milton wrote, "Sure enough we are that Britain hath been anciently termed Albion, both by the Greeks and Romans." It seems that "Albion" was a word alluding to "purity and loftiness." This was the attitude to a writer of the 1880's: "Albion for many years was one of the pleasantest towns in Northern Indiana in which to reside. But little drinking was indulged in and scarcely a drunken man was seen on the street." The writer, Weston Goodspeed, then bared his then current comment: "There is more liquor consumed in the town at present than ever before. The fines for drunkenness and the license paid by the liquor dealer are at present an important source of revenue." This, it must be remembered, was in the 1880's.

Albion's incorporation as a town occurred in 1874 after seventy-eight voters petitioned county commissioners to elevate the social status of the village. History relates, "In accordance with the prayer of the petitioners, the commissioners ordered an election to be held on the 24th of March, 1874, to ascertain the will of the citizens as to the incorporation of the village.

"At the June term of the commissioners, James Greenman, John H. Bliss and Franklin B. Kiblinger, inspectors of the election, reported that eighty-five votes had been cast for the incorporation of Albion, and forty-four against the same, whereupon the commissioners on the 8th of June, 1874, ordered the creation of the incorporated town of Albion."

Albion wasted little time to select officers for its new civil corporation. An order for an election was issued June 23, 1874, with the result that Alexander Fulton, Sherman J. Hadley and Jacob J. Fischer were named as town trustees. A fourth official was Merritt C. Skinner, who perhaps was the key man as assessor, clerk and treasurer. Trustees in turn appointed Peter A. Sunday as town marshal and Thomas M. Eells, town attorney.

It may be some comfort to those who are or may have been involved in school building disputes to learn that such arguments are anything but new. In 1849, Albion argued over the location of its first school and five years later, when the township was formed, residents of York and Jefferson grumbled about division of their respective school funds. In 1875 the building of a new school was accompanied by complaint, but one finally was built at a cost of $17,000. It might be pointed out that the contractor building the new school is reported to have swindled the town. One version of the fraud is, "The terms of the contract were not complied with by the contractor, who fraudulently reduced the height of the upper story about nine inches, cut down the size of the upper windows, and failed to put plaster on in the required manner." The dispute ended with the contractor reducing his price by $900.00.

In Noble County, one thinks of Albion when he thinks of taxes. This was true after the county seat was relocated in the town, but before that it was Port Mitchell of the 1830's that one recalled in thinking of taxation. Money not always was involved, since some settlers bartered farm produce and other chattels to satisfy tax claims against them. One of these surrendered a coon pelt and a fawn skin to cover an assessment of $1.50.

It is interesting that in 1838 the taxes paid the new seat of government amounted to some $904.05. It is recorded that in 1843 "there was but one man in the whole county who was assessed with personal property in the amount of $500.00." That would be Joseph Galloway, of Washington Township.

After the county seat became assured in Albion, there was a "great rush" of new citizens. By 1848, at least seventy persons occupied the village and this figure leaped to 250 two years later. Percentagewise, this was rapid growth, By 1890, the population of the town and township had been placed at 1,300.

An editor of the "Albion Observer", a periodical of the 1850's, was a crusader. He wrote, "We wish to call attention to the fact that our village is infested with hogs and overrun with cattle and horses, that roam at pleasure through the streets, and make their nightly rendezvous upon the public square."

Albion and Albion Township, of course, have come a long way since then.

ORANGE TOWNSHIP

Of the many colorful histories of Noble County's thirteen townships, none is more so than that of Orange. First settled in 1833 or 1834, the township had and still has Rome City, a village with a background that remains unchallenged as a gaudy departure from the sameness usually found in other early county settlements. This alone makes Orange Township colorful.

Rome City was to survive while Northport, likely the first white settlement on the scene, died a fairly early death. Francis Comparet, a Frenchman who earlier traded with the Indians, platted Northport in December of 1838. He"laid out" 103 lots, but it is unlikely that more than a dozen families lived there at any one time.

Comparet sold his lots cheaply, but the village failed to grow. David Law opened a store in Northport, and in 1837 there was a tannery. Otherwise, Northport was anything but flourishing.

Rome City, originally known simply as "Rome", was platted in June of 1839 by John C. Mather and Ebenezer Pierce, who laid out 216 lots. After a post office was moved from Northport to Rome, letters were addressed to "Northport Post Office, Rome, Ind." Postal authorities then gave it the name "Rome City."

Rome City already had an interesting history by the time other settlements had just begun to take shape. There was, of course, the Northport Feeder Dam and the man-made Sylvan Lake, envisioned at one time as part of the state's ambitious canal project. The project ultimately failed, but its traces are forever found at Rome City. The lake set the village apart from other settlements, encouraging a growth that in these early years was not the usual pattern in most settlements.

As early as 1845 Rome City was the site for a two-story hotel operated by Joel Doolittle. It was enlarged four years later and called the "Rome City Tavern." In 1851, under the ownership of James B. Kelly, it was further enlarged. At that point, Kelly and all Rome City claimed it to be the largest of its time in Northern Indiana. Accordingly, it was named "Mammoth Hotel", a three-story structure with a ball room on the top floor. At a social event of monumental proportions, 375 tickets at three dollars each were sold for a ball at the "Mammoth Hotel." In 1857 it was renamed the Lake Side Hotel upon its purchase by Steve Helmer. As one might well guess, it was in 1878 destroyed by fire as disasters of this type continued unabated the length and breadth of Noble County.

There would appear little doubt that such imposing structures as the "Mammoth Hotel" in 1851 were viewed with some envy by the relatively few families living in such places as Kendallville about nine miles to the south and east. It would be several years, indeed, before Kendallville could equal Rome City in what modern Chambers of Commerce might call "growth potential." As for "hotels", probably an euphemism, it wasn't until three years after Doolittle built his Rome City enterprise that Kendallville had its first one "of any consequence", as history observes.

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that Rome City would bow to no community in Noble County. As a case in point, there was the woolen mill established by Bliss, Poole ' Company in 1855, eight years before Kendallville, for example, was even incorporated as a town.

Bliss, Poole & Company in 1855 erected what has been described as a "large, three-storied building, about 60 by 110 feet." In it were placed "three sets of machines."

"Under the management of Mr. Bliss", it is related, "the factory entered upon a season of great prosperity. Some sixty employees, nearly half of whom were women. were hired in different departments, and the concern turned out large quantities of flannels, yarns, jeans, broadcloths, fulled-cloths, shoddy, satinet, doeskins, and similar goods."

Bliss, Poole & Company's business "soon doubled and trebled" the population of the village and for at least four years the mill did business amounting to $70,000 annually, a figure fairly astronomical for that day.

There is a discordant note, however, and it is a noisy one. Bliss, Poole & Company was a firm in which stock was sold, with many area farmers becoming stockholders of record. They pledged their farms as security in some cases.

The company's period of prosperity was followed by its depression, though the reason is not clear. It is simply recorded that "lack of funds" contributed to the downfall. This turn of events had widely felt repercussions since "a number of the farmers who had pledged their farms as security for the payment of their stock were compelled to sell out in order to get means to settle the claims against them."

The property was sold at a sheriff's sale and, rather surprisingly, Mr. Bliss was the buyer. Bliss later traded it to a firm called Clement & Kennedy for a factory in Charleston, Illinois. The new proprietors failed to restore the mill's vigor and it fell into the hands of William Geisendorff, "who ran it successfully for a few years." William in turn transferred the mill to his brother, J. C. Geisendorff. The latter operated the mill a short time until May of 1874, at which time, as might be imagined, it burned down.

As soon as William Geisendorff sold the mill to his brother, J. C., the former erected another mill in Rome City. Known as the Magnet Woolen Mills, it occupied a building about sixty feet square. Magnet lasted two years and was vacated, but when the original mill burned, it reopened and was in business, under different ownership, until 1877. In that year, Magnet went out of business for good. It, too, burned.

Rome City also is unique for another reason. Sylvan Lake in wintertime was an obvious source for natural ice, a refrigerant quite in demand many years before development of artificial ice and electrical refrigeration. Businessman J. C. Geisendorff, of the earlier woolen mill fame, recognized lake ice as a profitable commodity and in 1872 started a business that "subsequently reached considerable proportions." Geisendorff's business flourished "until the introduction of artificial ice gave a blow to the business."

As in other townships of the 1830's, non-hostile Indians fought a losing battle with the times. There are records indicating that at least two Indian villages, probably those of the Pottawatomies, still struggled in the lake area. One of them, history records, was called "Pa-Hed-Ketch-a", the name a reasonable phonetic approach to the true Indian word. There was little romance, however, with respect to the Indian. In fact, in Orange Township he was described as one who "got drunk whenever he had the opportunity", and when he did he was prone to fight.

So it is from Indians to the modern village of Rome City and the fertile lands of Orange Township that this area has progressed through years of colorful development. It is fitting that in Indiana's sesquicentennial year Rome City may be on the threshold of incorporation as a town, showing that to this day progress is anything but over.

SPARTA TOWNSHIP

In a sense, Sparta Township's historical record may date back as early as 1816 since it was in about that year that a man named Beers is reported to have been commissioned by the federal government to make a brick kiln with which to provide materials for a brick house for the Indian Chief, Wah-wa-es-sa, better but more vulgarly known as "Flat Belly."

Tradition holds that this was in what was to become Sparta Township, although the record in the matter is unclear. In any event, Flat Belly's brick house is said to have fallen down because Beers' brick was of poor quality, but Beers at least had the distinction of building what likely was the first kiln in Northern Indiana.

There is however another and quite different version

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of the "Flat Belly" story, and somewhere in between the two lies the truth. According to T. C. Holcomb, contemporary and knowledgeable Noble County historian.

"One of the most ancient, as well as one of the least known spots of interest, is the site of the old brick council house of the Pottawatomies. It was the first brick structure in the county and was erected about 1820, although the exact date is somewhat hazy. It was situated about a mile north of the present Indian Village and was erected by the government in part payment for some lands. The tribe had ceded its rights to the state in exchange for a strip six miles square and the house above mentioned.

"In this house the two chiefs, Oua-we-as and Flat Belly, lived for a time, until the walls cracked and they became frightened and abandon it, except as a stable for their ponies in rough weather.During a tornado it was blown to the ground and only a few brick fragments are left to mark the spot."

The township's first settler is recorded as John L. Powers, described as "eccentric", perhaps because history holds that he once lived in a cave in the western part of the district. Powers is believed to have settled the township in about 1832, not long after which he and his family moved westward and forever disappeared from the Noble County scene.

The scramble for land in Perry and other townships had certain unhappy aspects, an example of which is provided by Mitchell McClintock and Obadiah Tilton. They were squatters and among the first township settlers. In the early 1830's, an opportunist named George Platter "entered both of their farms before either had an opportunity of going to the land office for the same purpose."

Platter, it would seem, had capitalized on the oversight of McClintock and Tilton rather than acting outside the law. Nonetheless, one observer took a dim view of Platter:

"McClintock soon after died, and it was said that his death was largely due to his being cheated out of his land. Tilton returned to New York. Many mean actions of this sort were done in pioneer days, the greed for land, and the desire to profit by the mistakes or negligence of others, overpowering the better instincts."

It was in Sparta Township that a water-powered sawmill with the longest life in Noble County is said to have been built by Thomas H. Bothwell and Thomas H. Wilson, in 1847. It was located in the southwestern section of the township on Turkey Creek. In operation until 1862, the mill produced some 2,000 board feet a day with an up and down saw and an old flutter wheel. The Bothwell-Wilson mill was replaced by another a half-mile downstream and in 1865 still another was built on the site by Leander Eagles. Eagles' mill was described as "more modern", with a capacity of 6,000 to 8,000 board feet per day, turned out by a thirty-five horsepower engine. Thus, there is evidence that Sparta Township was one of Noble County's major sawmill centers of an early year.

The township is also singular in that it can claim Noble County's first seat of government, though the honor was short-lived. This would be Sparta, of course, a village platted in mid-1836 by Isaac Spencer and R. I. Dawson on Sections 13 and 24. Sparta on the drawing board consisted of two hundred and thirty-six lots, laid off in blocks of twelve lots each, with certain lots reserved for a public square and for school and church use.

State commissioners summoned here to designate a county seat selected Sparta, but little or nothing was done to fulfill the promise of prestige on Noble County's frontier. The county seat was soon re-locate in Augusta and Sparta's population probably never exceeded twenty-five. It has long since been thoroughly erased by time.

There was more in store for the village of Cromwell, laid out in 1853 by a county surveyor employed by Harrison Wood, the proprietor. Cromwell, unlike Sparta, is very much on the map. In 1849, on the future Cromwell site, Abel Mullen built a log cabin and also a small building "in which he began the manufacture of black salts from ashes obtained from the surrounding cabins and log heaps." Mullen soon gave up the business, "having found it unprofitable."

Sparta Township's first election was conducted about 1838 and its farcial element is best described by a writer of an earlier year:

"Election to township office was then merely an empty honor, there being no remuneration for service, and it is said that on a subsequent occasion, when two men had received the same number of votes for an office, they played euchre to see which would serve, the loser to take the office."

Only seven votes were cast in 1838, but two years later this increased to forty.

Construction of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad through the township inspired the village of Kimmell, which, like Cromwell, has endured to this day. Kimmell, it is said, practically occupies the site of the ambitious but aborted Sparta.

PERRY TOWNSHIP

Perry Township is distinctive in that it was here that Noble County's first settlement of any size began to grow as the pioneers were drawn by the richness of the soil, the absence of trees and the contour of the land. It is also distinctive because it was in Perry township that Ligonier, for years Noble County's largest town, thrived.

The township named after the first settler, Levi Perry, who arrived in 1830 and was soon followed by Isaiah Dungan and Richard Stone. What their eyes surveyed had been described: "The soil was rich and the absence of trees saved the settlers an immense amount of labor. The brush was easily cut down, and the tough roots which permeated the soil were conquered by heavy plows, capable of turning over nearly a yard of earth, which were drawn by eight or ten yoke of oxen. Thus the wild and irregular surface was quickly transformed into smooth fields of growing grain."

Perry Township was a source of comfort to other pioneers who had settled the less hospitable countryside. "So plentiful were corn and other products that the farmers on Perry's Prairie were soon able to supply the less fortunate settlers in other parts of the country, who 'made the pilgrimage to Egypt', as they called it, in search of provisions, which they always obtained..." "Perry's Prairie" was the name applied to the entire district.

Other distinctions are credited to Perry Township, for it was here that the first Noble County post office is said to have been established, the first election after creation of the county in 1836, and the first selections were made for the first county court.

The long-gone village of Rochester was founded in November of 1836 by Simpson Cummins. It was laid out on Section 26, Township 35, Range 8, with fifty blocks and fractional blocks surveyed along the Elkhart River bank, where already several dwellings had been built. It was in Rochester that Noble County's first heavy industry developed. In 1837, Baldwin and French organized an "iron factory", with eight or ten teamsters hired to haul iron ore from "Ore Prairie" in York Township. About 1844, Richmond & Beall started a foundry for the manufacture of plow castings, pots, kettles and other articles of common use.

By 1845, Rochester claimed a population of more than 100, making it a flourishing community by standards of that day. But, it is related, "The growth of Ligonier, and other causes, finally brought about the lingering death of Rochester, and its one-time inhabitants sought other and more fruitful fields of enterprise."

As Rochester faded, Ligonier grew, and this sesquicentennial year is one of only two Fifth Class cities in Noble County. Its growth, in fact, was more rapid than that experienced by Kendallville in the formative years of both towns.

Ligonier also was one of the first villages to be platted as its first citizen, Isaac Cavin, "laid it out" in May of 1835 and duly recorded it in LaGrange County, which then included what is now Noble County. This was during the presidency of Andrew Jackson.

Cavin came to the locality from Westmoreland County in Pennsylvania, arriving in 1830 and entering eight acres at the land office in Fort Wayne. His original plat of Ligonier embraced forty acres which contained 110 lots. Oddly, Cavin never lived in the village itself, but resided instead for about fifty years some five miles to the northeast of it.

Cavin was well traveled, if only because he made seventeen trips between Perry Township and his native Pennsylvania. He made the journey on horseback or by wagon in all but two instances, when he traveled by the new railroad route. Cavin died in 1884, leaving today's modern Ligonier as a Perry Township legacy.

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Ligonier and strawberries to together, and this is explained by a historian: "The site on which the village was founded had formerly been used by the Indians as a depository of animal bones, which had formed a rich mould, giving rise to a great profusion of wild strawberry vines, the fruit of which was utilized by early settlers." Even to this day, strawberries have a special significance, if only because the city in recent years has been celebrating "Strawberry Days" as an annual event.

Ligonier's early growth was slow. Although platted some five years earlier, but two or three families lived in the village in 1840. In five more years the population was about fifty, with a doubling of this figure by 1850. But by 1860 Ligonier had grown to 900 souls, very likely making it Noble County's largest settlement as it out-distanced the village of Kendallville, eighteen miles to the East along the same railroad that nurtured the development of both. By 1880, Ligonier boasted a population of about 2,000. Earlier, in 1864, the village petitioned county commissioners for incorporation as a town, following by a single year the similar incorporation of Kendallville. In 1892, Ligonier was incorporated as a city.

Isaac Cavin didn't stop with Ligonier. He platted sixty lots and called it "Washington", but Washington failed. So did another Perry Township village, "Hawville."

What was Perry Township like in the 1830'? And who was Mrs. Galbreth? A writer fairly close to the scene has this to say:

"The scenery of the township was picturesque, especially along the banks of the Elkhart River, which abounded with fish, furnishing the pioneers with an additional food supply. Bears were rarely seen, having retreated to the wild pine forests of Michigan, but deer were numerous, and hundreds fell victims to the settler's rifle. One very successful method of hunting them was to float down the river at night in a canoe, with a bright light. The deer which came down to the river at that time to drink would stare at the light until shot down.

"The Indians were very numerous and would exchange venison or furs with the settlers for provisions and whiskey. When unprovided with articles of barter they would resort to any device to obtain what they wanted without rendering an adequate equivalent.

"They were not always well treated by the whites, on whose minds were strongly impressed stories of former outrages by the savages. Mrs. Galbreth, who lived in the northern part, had been captured by the Indians in Pennsylvania many years before. She had seen her mother and sister cruelly tomahawked and scalped, and had been dragged far off into the wildered by the savage foes, with whom she remained a prisoner many wretched years until she finally either managed to make her escape, or was given up by her captors."

Such is the stuff of Perry Township history.

ALLEN TOWNSHIP

Although the settlement of Allen Township was early and rapid, the pioneers were indifferent to such matters as politics. This was made clear in August of 1837 when the township's first election was scheduled to be held in the cabin of George T. Ulmer, a native of Maine who drifted in from Summit County, Ohio on a wagon drawn by a large yoke of oxen. The election was conducted, but it was ruled invalid since only two persons were present to cast ballots.

A second election was scheduled for the following year and indeed was held, but this also had its complications. The returns were sent to Sparta, then the county seat of government, by way of Fort Wayne. It was three weeks before the returns reached their destination at the county seat to the west. Such were the hazards of politics in Allen Township at an early year.

Ulmer was the first white settler in Allen Township arriving in 1834 and locating on a tract of eighty acres in Section 4. Then followed Samuel Weimer in 1836, followed later in the same year by Alpheus Baker, Elihu Wadsworth and Dorus Smith. Many were then to follow through the year 1844. Their families bore names still familiar in the township and the county: Reed, Brown, Adams, Geiser, Iddings, Boerck, Jones, Richett, Rice, Whitford, Woodruff, Berry, Bidwell, Bixler, Broughton, Carpenter, Hide, Harding, Hill, Haynes, Hunter, Isbell, Littlefield, Laller, McBarns, Potter, Payne, Ross, Randall, Roberts, Saylor, Steele and there were others.

Allen Township's history is linked closely with the name Asa Brown, creator of the village of Lisbon in the mid-1830's. Lisbon, lying in the far north of the township, might have become Noble County's largest city had it not been for Brown himself, an irony that is exquisite even today.

History describes Brown as "an enterprising man, but he was grasping in financial matters, so much so that he finally ruined Lisbon by his refusal to sell corner and other valuable lots in the village, and by steadfastly denying that he was under any obligation to use his influence in securing the location of a railroad through the town." The reference is to what was to become the New York Central Railroad of today.

In any event, Brown platted 24 lots in Lisbon along the Lima and Fort Wayne Road. A man of some means, Brown built a steam sawmill, an ashery, a hotel and other enterprises which helped Lisbon flourish perhaps as much or more than many other villages in Noble County. Meanwhile, he held to the position that Lisbon's expected growth would mean that "sooner or later the prices demanded for the lots must be paid."

Brown is said to have died a pauper. Dying a pauper was in sharp contrast to the visions. Brown must have had when he received a deed from the United States Government, which read:

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"The Town of Lisbon is laid out and situated upon Section 9 in Township 34 north, range 11 east, in the County of Noble, State of Indiana, and the southeast corner of Lot No. 11 bears north 45 degrees, west 46.66 feet from a point in the center of Fort Wayne, Augusta and Lima State Road, where they cross said section of the lots in said town except Lot No. 11, which are 132 feet in length, by sixty feet in width, and the streets are 66 feet and the alleys 20 feet in width; said Albion Street running east and west and Main Street runs from said post south 35 degrees east, and north 27 degrees west and the lots are laid out at right angles with Main Street."

This complicated bit of surveyor's terminology was signed by none other than President Martin Van Buren and was dated March 13, 1835. It involved the monetary consideration of $200.

Lisbon's prosperity, before its rapid decline with the routing of the railroad through Kendallville, must have been booming. In about 1845, Lisbon was a stop for a circus which included five performing elephants!

Hastening Lisbon's decline was a "conflagration" in an unrecorded year. "In a short time it destroyed seven buildings and a considerable amount of furniture and other property." Not long afterwards, it was written: "The epitaph of Carthage may be appropriately written on the monument of Lisbon."

As noted elsewhere, the community of Lisbon today is very likely larger than it was in the Brown era, an irony stemming from the fact that it has become a settlement of area workers who fled the depressed coal mining regions south of the Ohio River for employment in area foundries and factories.

Avilla, the township's only incorporated town, had its first resident in the person of Noah I. Hill, who is described as "a good man and an enterprising citizen of excellent judgment." Hill built the first house in Avilla at an early year and, as was so often the case when a dwelling was raised along a well-traveled road, it was turned into a "tavern", which very likely bore resemblance to similar establishments today.

Hill also was "honored with the then prominent official position of justice of the peace, and was continued thus for a long period of years." Nonetheless, a historian was moved to write: "Mr. Hill not only sold liquor, but enjoyed the glass himself, and drank a great deal in social conversation with travelers and customers."

Early industry in the Avilla area included the brickmaking facilities of Maternus Blust, who began his business in 1862 a short distance north of the village. A writer fascinated by statistics reports that Blust used 112 cords of wood in processing 280,000 bricks his first year of operation. A few years later he was producing 500,000 bricks annually, requiring 150 cords of wood. Blust later moved his business into Avilla and added the manufacture of tile.

A hoop factory was started about **1880 by** Wood & Haynes. Since hoops were not profitable for Wood & Haynes, they "turned their attention to the manufacture of pumps, also cider, cane sugar, jelly and other products." If this is the case, and it likely is, Avilla probably can claim the only cane sugar factory in the long history of Noble County.

If Avilla this sesquicentennial year is interested in a centennial celebration of its birthday, it can look forward to the year 1976. In 1876, Avilla voters petitioned Noble County Commissioners to incorporate the village as a town. This was accomplished without legal entanglement and an election of town officials soon followed. These officials were the brickmaker, Blust, along with S. P. Stewart, Henry Yeiser, E. D. Haynes and Samuel Hoke. Two years later they were re-elected.

Over the last several years Avilla has been adding to its population, although it is not an industrial community. This growth, although slow, today has given Avilla a population of approximately 1,000.

JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP

Good farmland, for the most part, was the common denominator to be found among the townships created when Noble County was organized in the 1830's. This appears to be particularly true in Jefferson Township, which has been described as "gentle rolling, with but few marshes or swamps." The soil, it is said, was a "rich, black loam, with a clay sub-soil, capable of producing excellent crops of grain and clover, and suitable also for orchards, while there was a large and valuable growth of timber, such as black walnut, poplar, oak. cherry, ash, beech, and hard maple, with occasional trees of other species."

While time and nature may have altered this description but little over the years, it is a safe assumption that at least in the area of swine-raising, Jefferson Township farmers today have not the problem faced by those of a much earlier year.

Domesticated animals such as cows and pigs were turned free in the woods and the farmer without doubt found it a job to return them to the fold. "This unrestrained freedom caused many of the swine to become wild, so that at times, pork had to be obtained, like any other game, with rifle."

A man named Miller claimed the first land entered in the township, but the first white settler is recorded as David Herriman, coming to the county from Richland County in Ohio. Herriman, who was soon to leave the state, sold his land to Samuel C. Spencer in 1838 Spencer lived on the farm many years before selling it to George Harvey.

Many of Noble County's early arrivals migrated west from Ohio. Spencer, for instance, was from Huron County and before him, in October of 1836, a party came from Richland County. This group included Lewis and Benjamin Potts, Jehu Foster, James Thompson and Manassa Thompson, along with James Skinner, from

Huron County. These men brought their families and Jefferson Township's wilderness rapidly surrendered to their enterprise.

Stephen Barhan was a settler of 1837, and others arriving in that general period were John Peabody, Joseph P. Riddle, John Call, Alfred Martin, John Grubb, Martin Smith, Henry Carothers and Smith Ashley. Many of these surnames are still to be found in modern directories.

There was no luxury housing in Jefferson Township or anywhere elso in Noble County in the 1830's. As one writer observed, "The earliest cabins erected by these settlers and others were built of small round logs, the cracks or crevices between them being filled in with clay, while the floor was of puncheous, or split logs with the face smoothed. The furniture was confined to the most necessary articles and was chiefly home-made."

The settlers first planted corn, potatoes and buckwheat and later, wheat and other gains and vegetables, all of which flourished. Numerous streams and springs aided stock raising, and all in all life was comparatively abundant in Jefferson Township.

There was no such thing, of course, as convenience in shopping for merchandise or services. Township settlers were obliged to travel to Fort Wayne for many of their supplies, and when they wanted grinding done, they had to go to Stoufer's Mill, located on the Elkhart River, two miles northwest of Goshen in Elkhart County, a distance of about thirty-five miles.

The inevitable sawmill was soon to make an appearance. The first in Jefferson Township is credited to Samuel C. Spencer, in 1846, who built on a small stream called Buck Creek, in Section 20. Later, two steam sawmills were started, one by George Inscho in the center of the township, and the other by Thomas Hudson, near the southeast corner. With the blacksmith shop also a necessity of those years, one was opened bv Uriah Turmbo at a settlement called "Baker's Corners." All these enterprises have long since disappeared.

Unlike many townships, Jefferson never claimed an ambitious promoter who "laid out" a village within its boundaries, nor did an industry ever live or die on its soil. But farms were well founded and to this day prosper in Jefferson.

The township, like a few others in the county, is believed to have once been the home of the mysterious "Mound-Builders." In any case, early accounts tell of several mounds discovered in the township, "some containing skeletons, or human bones, along with ashes and charcoal, and occasionally implements and ornaments."

Jefferson Township's first election was conducted in the spring of 1838. What few voters there were elected James Skinner, Lewis Potts and Jehu Foster as trustees, John Call as justice of the peace, and Alfred Martin as constable.

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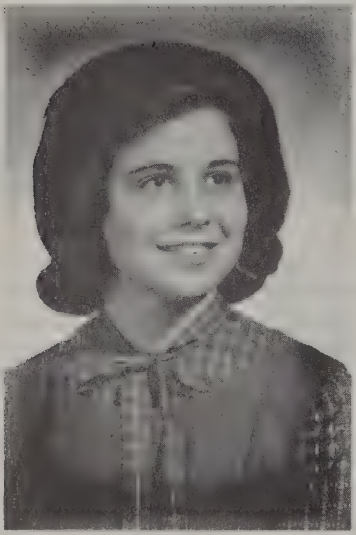

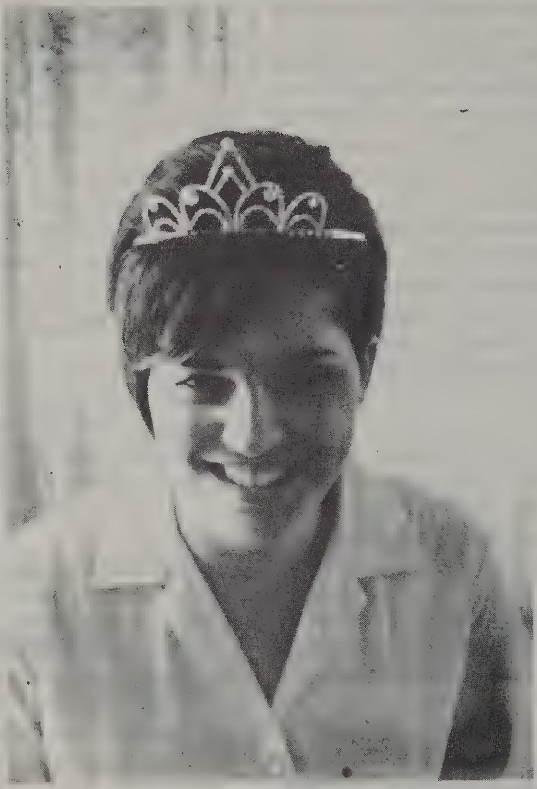

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Green Township

Sharon Harper
Sparta Township

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Allen Township

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Barbara LaRowe
Swan Township

Janet Butler
Jefferson Township

It is recorded that "These men rendered good service without reward and were unanimously re-elected."

GREEN TOWNSHIP

If there are Irishmen to be found today in Green Township, it would be no surprise. In the early 1830's, when settlers began drifting in throughout all Noble County, the Township of Green received its share of pioneers, few though they may have been. There is one difference, however, since it is recorded that Irishmen hired by the state to work on the abortive canal project began settling the eastern part of the township after they lost their jobs when the canal was abandoned.

These Irishmen could not have been too far removed from their native Ireland, so Green Township can claim with some certainty that at least some of its pioneers represented a specific ethnic group, its blood still to be fully filtered through America's so-called melting pot.

Since whiskey appears to have been abundantly available on the frontier, even though its transportation must have been laborious, it would not be surprising if stories still lingered today about Green Township's hard-drinking Irish community, with every night a Saturday night. The truth is, the Irishmen were farmers, perhaps more by necessity than by choice. When they found themselves out of work on the old canal, they turned to the soil, and there they apparently lived in peace.

There is a report, however, that the fun-loving Irish slipped at least once from their role as good citizens. In 1839, a few of them invaded Swan Township, intent on voting in that township's election conducted in the cabin of one Hamilton Badger.

"The occasion was one of disorder, resulting in several fights, as some of the canal men from Green Township came over and insisted on voting without any right to do so, and as a consequence Mr. Strous (a justice of the peace) had to try a number of cases of assault and battery." History thus quietly records the incident.

A man named Krewson squatted in the southwestern corner of the township to become its first recorded settler, in 1833 or perhaps slightly earlier. Aside from the travail involved in battling the virgin land, Krewson also had to battle his wife, who is described as a "large, coarse woman with a stentorian voice, and much addicted to profanity." Mrs. Krewson proved, if nothing else, that the voice in the wilderness need not be a small, still one.

In about 1834 or 1835, Samuel Gray legally entered the land at the United States land office in Fort Wayne. This obliged Krewson and his family to leave and, as it happened, to disappear forever from the Noble County landscape.

Gray does not occupy a savory position in Green Township history, in that he "was much addicted to sharp practices in regard to land transactions." At one point this involved Samuel Lindsey, who is said to

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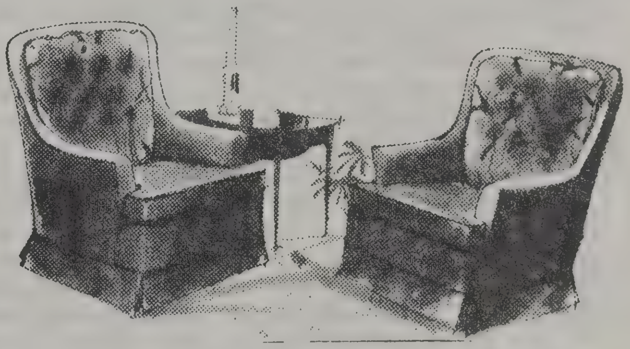

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have purchased a parcel of ground from Gray when Gray actually didn't own it. Lindsey, however, kept the land.

The history of the Lindsey family is unhappy in another respect. Samuel was stricken ill and ultimately died while under the care of a pioneer doctor. The family suspected that someone with a grudge bribed the doctor to poison Lindsey, but this remains a mystery.

Tragedy struck again in the family when the oldest son, some sixteen years old, drowned in Lindsey Lake.

Accidents on the frontier no doubt were many, but man was more likely to sicken and die of natural causes than as the victim of violence. Such was not the case, however, in the summer of 1855 when a double tragedy shook the township and the county. William Applegate and Franklin Weirich were digging a well, and it was Applegate's turn to take his shovel into the hole. There he was overcome by gas. Weirich went to his rescue and before losing consciousness summoned help. Rescuers were pulling him to the surface with a rope when he lost his grip, fell back into the well and suffered a broken neck. Both Applegate and Weirich were dead when they were removed.

In the rather somber tones of obituaries of the day, history says that "Weirich left a wife and several small children who suffered great hardships after their natural protector was taken from them."

Not too much is recorded about the marksmanship of pioneers in Green and other townships, but it is clear that skill with a rifle might mean the difference between a turkey dinner and almost no dinner at all. Wild game of the day included bear, deer and turkeys, among other fowl. There also was a predator, the wolf. So, sharpshooting ability meant the difference between a brace of quail on the table and corn meal mush, along with protection against such menaces as the voracious wolf and, now and then, an unruly bear.

At least one Green Township marksman has the attention of history. William McDaniel "went one day to an early election, and on his arrival discovered that the men who had arrived before him had been shooting at a mark — a nail-head as far off as it could be seen. No one had hit the mark. Mr. Gaff offered to bet the whiskey for the crowd that McDaniel could hit the nail at the first attempt. The bet was taken and Mr. Gaff won, as on examination it was found that McDaniel's bullet had split itself on the nail-head."

Green Township's historical reputation is almost without blemish. The only departure, it appears, is that the township was the home and sometimes the rendezvous of a few "Blacklegs", a loosely-knit organization of thieves and counterfeiters of whom much has been written. Still, the evidence is shaky. Someone onc found a half-bushel of unstamped copper coins under a Green Township tree stump and it was concluded that "Blackleg" counterfeiters had hidden them there with the intention of galvanizing them with silver and then stamping them into half-dollars.

It also is added, "In a swamp not far from the same place a buggy and rusty gun barrel were also found, the mute evidence probably of some former crime."

Green Township is noted for its rolling hills and its lakes rather than its industry. This was true many years ago, as well as today. Sawmills and grist-mills comprised the industry, as is not surprising. The earliest mill is credited to Chancey C. Walker, some two miles south of Green Center, but after about ten years it was abandoned. Levi Diller, sometime after 1857, operated a lumber mill capable of 10,000 feet or more a day, but it also was abandoned.

Green Township's first election was likely in March of 1839 when some fifteen persons voted. Benjamin Macemore was elected township clerk and William Caswell, a squatter, was named justice of the peace. Caswell, by the way, drew the solid support of a powerful voting bloc—the Irishmen who left the canal to farm in Green Township.

In 1844, Mason M. Merriam opened a small grocery and Hiram Lindsey for several years kept a general store on his farm. Christian Kinsey operated a tavern on the old Goshen Road, while other settlers "entertained travelers, for lack of public accommodations."

Merriam, Lindsey, Walker, Blue--these are the names emerging from Green Township's past and still tied to today.

The Green Township of Indiana's sesquicentennial year is the setting for one of the state's newest parks, Chain O' Lakes. Dotted with lakes, gentle hills and valleys, the township remained undiscovered for years while the state was busy peppering its real estate with parks from the Ohio River to the Michigan line. Now it recognized as a recreational area of great potential as the busy man of 1966 tries to retreat, for awhile, from his office, his lathe and his artificial luxury.

ELKHART TOWNSHIP

One of Elkhart Township's earliest arrivals, David P. Bourie, was a man of enterprise. This is indicated in records that show Bourie was soon to build a log storeroom and stock it with $1,000 worth of merchandise. This was in the early 1830's, and three years after the store was built, Bourie's inventory was listed at some $4,000.

His enterprise did not stop there. Tardy in entering his land with the government land office in Fort Wayne, Bourie ran the risk of losing it and such was the case when two strangers were seen by Bourie "making a close examination of his property." The strangers then headed in the general direction of Fort Wayne.

Bourie disguised himself as an Indian, got a swift pony and soon overtook and passed the strangers. In the Fort Wayne land office he entered the property and soon "had the pleasure of witnessing the strangers' disappointment when they arrived and discovered they had been outwitted."

Bourie's store was open to the Indians whenever they could afford the merchandise. On one occasion, the Indians bought three silk hats for their chiefs, although silk hats seem to be an unlikely article to stock on the frontier of the 1830's and 1840's.

Bourie, a bachelor, feared not the Indian. For instance, one of the tribesmen fired a shot at one of Bourie's favorite dogs, whereupon Bourie grabbed the offender and "butted the savage's head against a log." Bourie valued the dog, it is said, because it was a "highly trained and useful animal which, it is said, would bring the cows home from the woods, go across the river and bring back a canoe, and trace stolen property."

It's quite possible, though improbable, that the first Noble County map showed towns that have been lost even to the most accomplished history buff today. This is not the case, though, with Pittsburg and Springfield, even if the names are unfamiliar to most of us.

Pittsburg very likely was the first village "laid out" in Elkhart Township, having its birth date listed as June of 1837. But Pittsburg existed, for all practical purposes, as a name only. John and William Knight platted Pittsburg on the east half of the northeast quarter, of the east half of the southeast quarter of Section 30, which description may dismay the commoner but which makes sense to the surveyor.

The village contained ninety-six lots laid out in blocks of eight and with "several donated for public purposes." Pittsburg, however, lost what little foothold it had on history. Its story ultimately was a common one: "The lots failed to sell, however, and but one building was begun, which was only partially completed."

The village of Springfield did much better. William Pierson is believed to have had it laid out in the northern part of Section 22 after building the first dwelling there, probably in the 1830's. Then there was a sawmill, operated by Joseph Steinbarger and later by his son, William. Next there were stores, if one can permit the euphemism, operated by the Chapoles, the Farvers, the Smiths, the Kneppers and the Steinbargers.

By 1845, Springfield was home for fifteen or more families, patronizing two stores, a grist-mill, a sawmill, a church and a schoolhouse. Springfield also is said to have had a post office, suggesting that its residents could feel confident of a golden future.

Soon after 1845, however, and for no recorded reason, the village began its slide into oblivion. As one historian wrote, rather poetically: "New buildings failed to appear, old ones became dingy and dilapidated, the streets became almost deserted, and Springfield remained but the ghost of its former fame. The ghost yet lingers, reluctant to leave the old place, so fraught with dim but cheerful memories." The ghost may have still "lingered" when the historian wrote his words, but today even Springfield's ghost has joined Springfield itself in Noble County's cemetery of civic dreams.

Wawaka, of course, is another story, for Wawaka is still on the map. Isaac Tibbot built the first dwelling in that area in 1834 and twenty-three years later, in 1857, platted what was to become a village of proportions never reached by Pittsburg and Springfield. Tibbot laid out eighty lots on each side of what is today the New York Central Railroad. Up to 1857, it appears, Tibbot was the area's only resident, for it is recorded that it was in that year that William Knepper built the second dwelling.

Tibbot boldly moved ahead and built the first store building which a Mr. Miles stocked with "dry goods and notions." Growth was slow for ten years, but in about 1867 "Ellis & Mummert erected a large frame, three-storied grist-mill, with three run of stone."

The mill cost $15,000, a small fortune just before the Civil War, but it surely more than paid for itself as it drew trade from "all the surrounding country."

The importance of the railroad to Wawaka, in these early years, is quite apparent. This is particularly true in the case of the Ellis & Mummert grist-mill: "As high as 100 barrels of flour were manufactured daily, much of which was shipped East. When the markets were low the owners bought considerable wheat at the Board of Trade at Chicago, shipping it to Wawaka, where it was made into flour, and then re-shipped to the Eastern market. They were favored in this by the railroad company, which charged them a through rate for freightage, as if it had not been unloaded at Wawaka."

Those acquainted with the perils of combustion before the days of modern fire apparatus might well guess what happened to the grist-mill of Ellis & Mummert. In 1874 it burned down, as did so many other buildings in Noble County of that and earlier years...and later, for that matter. Wawaka was hurt by the fire.

Mummert carried on with a sawmill, complete with a fifty horsepower engine and a double circular saw. Later, other businessmen had a successful traffic in the buying and selling of grain, with some 50,000 bushels of wheat shipped from the village in 1880.

This, roughly, traces the history of Wawaka, where today people still live a quiet, rural life. Quiet as it is, it isn't as quiet as that of Springfield and Pittsburg.

SWAN TOWNSHIP

Swan Township, unlike most of the others in the early years, showed some promise of becoming an industrial as opposed to a purely agricultural community. It had its ubiquitous saw and grist mills, to be sure, but it also had industries of another character due, chiefly, to the fact that the township straddled a busy north-south road almost in the beginning. Too, it became the site for two intersecting railroads. These factors, plus the willingness of investors to take a chance, created a climate that conceivably could have made the township an industrial center of today. It was, however, never to come to pass.

Early industries in Swan Township, developing in the village of Swan and the village of LaOtto, included a barrel stave factory, for example. This factory was

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created in the 1870's in Swan as a Fort Wayne man, F. S. Surick, had visions of a fortune to be made in the manufacture of staves for barrels. The factory turned out some 200,000 staves, then collapsed financially.

Other industries included a bedstead factory, for instance, then brick and tile factories. Bricks, tiles, bedsteads and barrel staves years ago took Swan out of the sawmill-grist-mill class and headed it, although too uncertainly, in the direction of an industrial township. The township looked in that direction, but that was all. It really didn't take a step.

A native of New York state, George Rickard, is listed in early records as Swan Township's first settler. He arrived in the autumn of 1833, built a small beech-log cabin on an eighty-acre tract and settled down to wringing a living out of the soil and trees around him.

Richard was an opportunist who turned his cabin into "a place of accommodation and entertainment" for travelers along the Lima Road, then in its earliest stages. The cabin, as small as it was, acquired the name "Buck-Horse Tavern."

In June, 1834, Conrad Cramer entered eighty acres adjoining the Rickard parcel, and then followed others named Shelner, Tousley, Strous, Barkwell and Salsbury. These were soon joined by the families of Flagg, King, Gifford, Broughton, Wright, Parker and Fulk. Then came others named Perry, Ackley, Blowers, Badger, Billings, Bricker, Brooks, Clapp, Carothers and Cooper. Names like these still are found today.

"The people were very hospitable to new arrivals", it is recorded. "They assisted them in the erection of their cabins, and in other ways. The woods soon became full of wild hogs, which the settlers short for food, and as there was plenty of other wild game, meat, as a rule, was easily procured. The first crops planted were usually potatoes, corn, pumpkins and wheat.

"Much fine timber was sacrificed, the trees being cut down and the logs burned to make room for the farms. Flax was also raised to furnish material for clothing made by the women. Sheep were soon introduced and thrived well, though it was necessary to protect them from the wolves which were then numerous in the timber. Occasionally a bear was trapped or shot, but this animal soon disappeared. The deer remained longer and venison was a common article of food with all the pioneer settlers.

"The earliest arrivals located along the Mongoquinong Road, which had been laid out previously on an old Indian trail, and which served as an artery to float the products raised in the township, and gave comparatively easy communication with Fort Wayne, which was for years the principal market for all Northern Indiana.

"The scarcity of money caused a recognized scale of barter to be established, which often differed greatly from the cash prices, always to the disadvantage of the settler who had not the cash. But in time, money became more plentiful and conditions improved."

In 1837 the township conducted its first election at the Rickard cabin, but only six qualified voters were present to cast ballots. History records some irregularity about this first election, although it does not suggest necessarily that it was dishonest. "Two or three officers were elected, but as no returns were made, the election proved invalid. Notwithstanding this, the election in the spring of 1838 was conducted in the same manner..." The only township officer of 1837-38 on the record today is John Fulk, who won as road inspector. In 1839, Jonas Strous was elected justice of the peace.

Swan Township villages are unique in that they were "laid out" at relatively late dates. The village of Swan, still on the road maps today, was platted in July of 1870 by Samuel Broughton, Orville Broughton and Franklin Hilkert. It embraced seventy-eight lots. As early as 1856 it was recognized as a possible village site by Ephraim Cramer, who in that year built a house and a store. Five years later the store burned, but it was replaced by a brick structure which Cramer occupied many years. In 1874 Robert Taylor and Allen Willetts built a grist-mill at a cost of $7,000 and it "manufactured excellent flour."

The village of LaOtto was platted shortly after the Swan venture but was to become more prosperous. David Simon built a steam sawmill in 1871-72, Martin Belger a blacksmith shop and Abraham Zern a shoe shop. In 1871, one hundred and one lots at the junction of Swan Township's two railroads were laid out by David Voorhees, Martin Belger, David Simon, Solomon Simon and Jonathan Simon.

The Simons wanted the village called "Simonville", but the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad called it "Grand Rapids Crossing." The latter designation was found "cumbersome" and in September, 1875, by a petition of freeholders, the name was changed to the present "LaOtto." This name was suggested by the Reverend B. F. Stultz, who today might not approve of the Post Office Department's corruption of the name to simply "LaOtto."

For several years after settlement of the township, it was without a grist-mill, with the closest at Port Mitchell and the other on the Goshen Road near Wolf Lake. Consequently, flour and meal were brought from Fort Wayne when weather and condition of the road permitted their movement. Sawmills arrived earlier, and the first one likely was erected by a Mr. Mendenhall near the center of the township. Another one built about the same time was that of Hiram King in the northern section of the township.

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The villages of Swan and LaOtto are both on today's modern maps, but they are unincorporated and never fulfilled the early promise of, perhaps, becoming industrial communities.

Instead, the Township of Swan is this sesquicentennial year is likely what nature intended it to be, a quiet, productive agricultural community.

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP

Were there any glamor at all in the wilderness, it wasn't to be found in the person of a man named Roop, said to have been Washington Township's first white settler.

Roop arrived in the township about 1833 and built a log cabin which history describes as being twelve feet square. Into these cramped quarters he crowded a wife and "some half-dozen" children. Mrs. Roop, to even further depress the picture, was "sallow looking."

The Roop children, an observer reports, ran naked in the summer and when the chill winds of fall began blowing in, the mother clad them in "some rude clothing." "Clad" isn't precisely the word, since the clothing "was sewed on and not removed until spring."
To further describe the children, it is recorded that "the children were so dark from exposure that when sitting on a rail fence they looked like turkey buzzards."

Roop on one occasion invited to dinner several nearest neighbors who had helped him raise a log stable. Mrs. Roop prepared a large pot-pie, after which the story unfolds: "At the conclusion of the meal one of the men asked the children what had become of the three or four young wolves which had been captured and tied near the house, when one of the children answered: 'Why, mam cooked 'em in the pot pie.'"

After a relatively brief residence in Washington Township, the Roops "journeyed to some other locality", but before they did, they got the township off to a less-than-stirring beginning.

Such apparent indolence on the part of Mr. Roop was not representative of the industrious, God-fearing men and their families who were shortly to follow Roop's arrival in about 1833. In 1836, the Scott family arrived and by the end of the same year about ten settlers in all occupied the township. They were men whose names are still left as a legacy to Noble County this sesquicentennial year: Galloway, Prickett, and Adair. By about 1840, there were enough settlers to enter all the township land with the United States land office, probably in Fort Wayne.

On April 3, 1837, Joseph Adair opened his cabin for the township's first election. This resulted in the first election. This resulted in the election of Adair as justice of the peace and it was his pleasure, in the spring of 1838, to unite in marriage the township's first couple, Jacob Scott and Lydia Lamson.

The same year in which Adair was named to office, Washington Township's first industry—a sawmill, as erected by Hugh Allison in the southwest section. The next recorded industry was that of John Ryder, whose sawmill was built in the western part of the township in 1848. The Ryder mill was described as "one of the best in the county" as it continued in business until about 1880.

Ryder, some seven years after he built his sawmill, erected a two-and-a-half-story grist-mill which also enjoyed a long career "though the quality of flour manufactured was not of high grade."

If Mr. Ryder's flour was not of the finest quality, he at least had a mill dam known for its fine fishing. Three men, Alfred Yohn, Lindsey Makenson and one other, not identified, were said to have landed 155 buffalo fish within three hours. The fish averaged twenty pounds, with the smallest weighing in at sixteen pounds and the largest, thirty-seven pounds. The Buffaloes, it is said,filled two wagons and either provided Washington Township's biggest fish fry on record, or enough fertilizer for a dozen gardens.

Industry followed the usual pioneer pattern in Washington Township. Apart from sawmills and grist-mills, a tanyard was established by Joseph Evans, who arrived in the township about 1840. In addition to the Ryder mills, Noah Myers owned and operated a sawmill many years. Another, built by one Mr. Sawyear for tion by steam power, was developed about 1867.

The history of early schools in Washington Township also was typical as the settlers tried to give their children the rudiments of a liberal education. "The early schools", it is recorded, "were held in the log cabins of the settlers until the first log school-houses were built, or sometimes a deserted cabin would be used and rudely fitted for the purpose."

Frontier hardship was nothing new, so it is not surprising that the children of the poorer settlers "were without shoes even in winter, and would cover their feet with any rags they could get hold of." By 1848, when circumstances likely were less severe, every township district had its own schoolhouse and classes were held regularly.

The township's first religious society is recognized as the Free Will Baptists, formed in 1837 in the home of John Prickett. The Free Will Baptists, however were on the scene but a brief time and later were followed by other denominations, including the Lutherans, who in 1861 erected a building in the western part of the township.

Washington Township, as others in the county, was troubled by wolves, a creature that has long since fled the area. "The pioneer settlers were much troubled with wolves", it is said, "and had to carefully guard their sheep, swine and fowls." Bears, too, were troublesome, but they soon fled the growing civilization of Washington and other county townships and today, like the wolves, no longer are found.

Deer also annoyed early Washington farmers "as they raided the wheat fields, usually in the early morning before the settler had arisen." But the deer had the solid virtue of providing a change of diet.

Roads in Washington Township, of course, did not exist in the familiar sense of the word in the 1830's, but there were two well-traveled Indian trails, one running from Indian Village in Sparta to Fort Wayne, and the other extending east to west. The former trail is interesting in that it led along a divide, "whence, it is said, two streams force their way, starting with a few feet of each other, one flowing into the Tippecanoe, thence onward to the Wabash, Ohio, Mississippi and Gulf of Mexico, and the other into the Elkhart, thence into the St. Joseph, the great Lakes, St. Lawrence River and the Atlantic Ocean."

Were it not for Washington Township, Noble County would be a perfect rectangle. As recorded elsewhere, it was voted in 1860 to permit residents of a strip two miles in width join Whitley County since Washington's greater distance from Albion, the county seat, worked a hardship on those citizens having legal and other business to perform. The annexation carved out a portion of the county, which up to the point had been of regular geographical proportions. A glance at today's post-1860 map makes this immediately clear.

The battle of 1860, if one can call it that, has long since been forgotten and today the descendants of Washington Township's early residents live happily in Whitley instead of Noble County. Noble County never tried to reclaim the land, and couldn't, for that matter. The annexation was carried out under the laws of the day.

So it is that Washington Township's early history begins on the rather sour note of a man named Roop who in his shiftlessness overcrowded his cabin and dined on baby fox "pot pie." Since Roop, however, good citizens have lived and died in Washington Township, even as they do today and will do tomorrow.

YORK TOWNSHIP

Anyone attempting to attach an aura of glamor about the noble Red Man is sure to be discouraged if his historical research takes him into the early background of York Township. It is there that the Indian, as colorful as he may have been or more distant frontiers, is described as common day laborer who slaked his thirst on raw whiskey and in turn brawled with his brethren in fights inspired more by strong drink than by deep-seated cleavage of purpose and principle.

Thus the Indians who peopled York Township these many years ago, instead of fulfilling the popular conception of the Red Man as created by the screen writer and the novelist, were instead an impoverished minority group who looked to the invading white man more for handouts than scalps. This is not to downgrade the Indian, for he too was proud and in his own right had a civilization serving his own purpose. But his lands were no longer his own as a superior civilization, often with force, often with deceit and sometimes with a measure of convenient legality, pushed the Indian from his hunting ground once and for all.

In any case, it was in 1829 or somewhere close to that year, the Henshaw brothers, Washington and James, squatted on the land soon to become York Township. Their settlement in the area likely was a year or two after 1829, since the historically prominent Joel Bristol has a firm grasp on the "first settler" title and one avoids placing anyone elso too close to 1829 in pinpointing the date of arrival on the Noble County scene. Washington and James Henshaw, whatever the chronological aspects of their decision to help settle the township, recognized the need for two frontier essentials, lumber and flour. Accordingly they built a sawmill and a grist-mill along the Elkhart River, where also they had constructed a dam. The mills were described as "rude affairs." It was said, "The bolter in the grist-mill was turned by hand, and the flour was course and black, while power was lost to the sawmill by imperfect shafting."

The Henshaws, finding white labor scarce, turned to the Indians with the promise of a barrel of whiskey to be delivered when the work was done. So it was that Red Man labored by the day, drank himself into a fighting rage and no doubt in his hangover reflected sadly upon an earlier, happier day.

York Township's first pioneer is recorded as John Knight, said to have located on Section 29 in 1829. Knight's arrival has to be recorded as some month later than April, for otherwise it would conflict with the Bristol case. Knight is not treated too kindly by history,

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described as he is. "He was a squatter and an adventurer, who cared little where he settled, so that he could obtain a bare living, and the piece of land hechose was merely a burr-oak barren, though plenty of better land lay within a mile of his place." Knight cleared off a garden plot and raised produce he could trade with the Indians, though he "depended largely on his rifle for the support of himself and his family." The claim for Knight that he was York Township's first citizen has been disputed, but if it hadn't been Knight, it would have been someone very much like him, a hardy gentlemen in a hostile environment which with wit and industry was conquered.

To safely generalize the question, Knight was among the first four settlers, their arrival probably dating from late 1829 to 1833. The others were the Henshaw brothers and Levi Perry. Perry, however, is better known for his link with the township that to this day bears his name.

These four were followed by Joseph Bradford, who today would have encountered certain legal entanglements in building a home under the same circumstances as those of the 1830's. Bradford, it seems, squatted on the land claimed by Knight, and the latter retreated to other quarters. History does not record what heated words, if any, were exchanged between Knight and the usurper, Bradford, although the latter's action was described as "without excuse." Despite Bradford's rather arbitrary land grab, he did not suffer a loss of reputation. In 1838 he was serving as a justice of the peace, though at that time he was living across the line in Sparta Township.

The sawmill and grist-mill of the Henshaw brothers was followed a few years later by the sawmill of Joseph Bell, built on Bell's Run in Section 21. A dam and a race operated the Bell enterprise, and the township's first "heavy" industry, a chair factory started by Halsey Lewis. "The factory was a rude affair, and the product of indifferent quality, and in a few years the enterprise was abandoned", it is reported with candor.

Bell's dam also fell in disfavor. It was called a "nuisance" since its waters overflowed on adjoining lands and was branded by the citizenry as a health hazard. These citizens bought the dam and promptly destroyed it. As for the mills of the Henshaws, the brothers sold the mills to Sauuel Hanna. As was so often the case in fire-conscious but fire-helpless early settlers, the grist-mill burned down and the flour mill, after passing through several hands, finally died of exhaustion. In about 1852 a sawmill was erected by Isaac Swarthout, but it was a financial failure and "soon fell to pieces."

York Township's first village was Augusta, of short-lived Noble County seat fame. It was platted by W. M. Holmes, George P. Whitaker, Thomas Gale and D. H. Colerick, businessmen of 1837. They soon were to see Augusta pale before Port Mitchell in the same Township when state commissioners designated the latter as the county seat after brigands were alleged to have touched a match to Augusta's courthouse. Half of Augusta's population shifted to Port Mitchell, platted in May of 1838 by Samuel Hanna and William F. Engle. Despite the big courthouse boom, Port Mitchell was to pass away under the impact of public opinion which held that the county seat should be re-located, as indeed it was in 1847.

Port Mitchell, however, didn't give up easily. In 1852, a man named Campbell built a woolen mill, a "two-story frame building 30 by 45 feet, and a considerable quantity of carding and spinning was done under the direction of a Mr. Walker, a practical spinner." The woolen mill still flourished as late as the Civil War years, but, almost inevitably, it burned down and the last trace of Port Mitchell was wiped out about 1872.

Another York Township village was Van Buren, though it existed only on the surveyor's map. Van Buren also had county seat visions, but visions they remained. Van Buren, it is recorded, "expired soon after being christened."

Early York Township pioneers turned to Fort Wayne for provisions beyond their capability to produce. They bought flour for $7.50 a barrel. But "provisions were sometimes hard to obtain and much privation had to be endured." Nearby "Perry's Prairie", a lush growing-ground in Perry Township, provided wheat, corn and potatoes.

York Township has not been without tragedy. An Elkhart River flood in 1844 "swept away dams and bridges and greatly injured the crops." It also cost a life, probably the first and last to be claimed in what was described as a "great flood" in Noble County.

"It was during this time of danger and excitement, on July 1, that Wesley White, one of the pioneer settlers, lost his life", history relates. "The bridge west of Augusta, across the Elkhart River, had been carried away, and a rope had been extended across the stream to aid persons who could not swim in crossing. Mr. White, who was on the west side and wanted to cross, attempted to do so by swimming, entering the water a little above where the rope had been stretched.

"There were twenty-five or thirty people present who urged him to avail himself of the rope, but he preferred to rely on his unaided abilities and plunged in. The current carried him swiftly down, and when he came to the rope he tried to seize it, but missed, and after a cry for help, sank in the muddy water, attempts to aid him being fruitless. His body was recovered the following day."

Though York Township's history herein ends on this note of tragedy, time records that floods never again "caused a profound sensation" though the county, as this one did in 1844.

WAYNE TOWNSHIP

Wayne's Township's history is so closely linked with that of Kendallville that the two are almost indistinguishable, although in area Kendallville is a relatively small section located in the township's geographical center.

Kendallville today claims most of Wayne's population, even as it did in the county's formative years, and perhaps it is for this reason alone that the histories of the two are tied together.

The township's first settler, and at the same time Kendallville's first settler, was one David Bundle. He arrived on the scene in 1832 or early 1833 and was followed shortly thereafter by a hardy pioneer woman, Mrs. Frances Dingman, whose name has been long preserved as Kendallville's first white woman resident. Mrs. Dingman, not long a widow and the mother of "five or six children", bought Bundle's rude cabin, was remarried and thereafter lived a long life in the infant county. Bundle disappeared after selling his property.

Others, but not many, occupied the site of Kendallville during the next two or three years, and not long after that settlers began taking over land in other parts of the township. By 1844, Wayne counted forty-two person on land of their own. It is recorded that "The organization of the county in 1836 caused a great rush for farms."It was added,"The land was cheap and a comfortable home could be secured with a little money, supplemented by a good deal of hard work, of which the average pioneer was not afraid."

Kendallville, meanwhile, was struggling to become a village, but by 1849, some 17 years after Bundle's first cabin, it still could claim no more than a dozen families. "Lisbon was a larger and more flourishing village", it is recorded. When in 1852 it appeared certain that the Southern Michigan and Northern Indiana Railroad was to pass through Kendallville, Kendallville's population began growing and by 1857 it was placed at more than 300. This, in 1857, was an impressive figure, matched only in Noble County by that claimed by Ligonier in Perry Township.

By 1863, Kendallville was incorporated as a town and three years later became a "city", as defined by Indiana law. Today it is a still-growing city, perhaps with 8,000 or more souls within its corporate limits and within the jurisdictional limits of its municipal planners.

While rural Wayne Township has the usual roll of "first" sawmills, grist-mills and tanneries, it very likely is in Kendallville that the township's story unfolds in the most meaningful manner. While the names Bundle and Dingman stand out in bold face as not only Kendallville's first residents but also those of the township, there are other names associated with Wayne Township of the 1830's and 1840's that, unlike Bundle and Dingman, are current on the modern scene. Forker, Sawyer and Longyear are but a few of the many.

Kendallville's history is related intimately with a man named William Mitchell who, four years after Bundle became the first resident, came to Wayne Township from New York. Although he was only twenty years old, Mitchell was soon named postmaster of the outpost on December 7, 1836. A man of drive and determination, he in 1849 platted twenty lots along what is now Main Street. In that year the village, now officially "laid out", acquired the name "Kendallville", in deference to the Postmaster General of the United States, Amos Kendall. Those of the twenty lots he could not sell, Mitchell "gave away to such people as would locate upon and improve them." This was in noticeable contrast to the proprietor in Lisbon, Asa Brown, who wanted to wait for the right price and thereby contributed to Lisbon's early decline.

Mitchell not only built Kendallville and, in a large measure, Wayne Township, he also lived to be a member of the United States Congress, a friend of Abraham Lincoln, a plank road builder, a philanthropist and a man of towering stature among his fellows. William Mitchell's son, John, in turn contributed to the township's and the city's growth. To this day, the name "Mitchell" is to be found on deeds, on streets, on business district blocks.

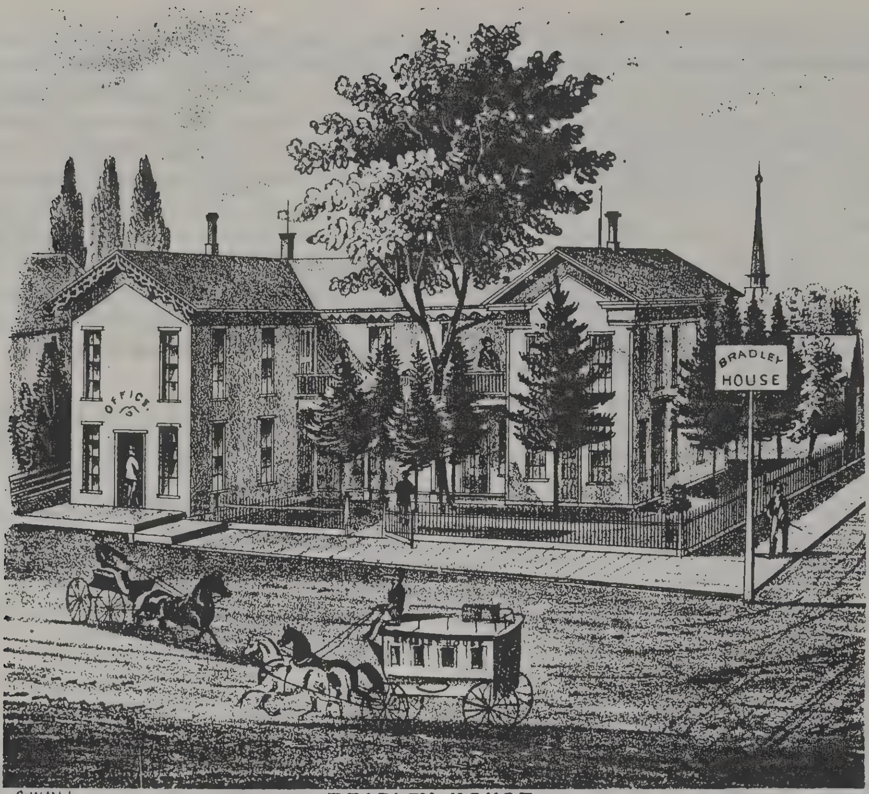
Kendallville's incorporation as a town provoked unkind remarks on the part of her neighbors: "The citizens proudly raised their heads a degree higher, looked sagely down their noses and thought unutterable things. Sidewalks were built, stagnant spots drained by effective sewers, stray animals were provided with suitable accommodations and aristocratic circles were unceremoniously tabooed." This, in any case, was the view of one observer.

Still, Kendallville has suffered its indignities. Efforts to move the county seat of government to the city were effectively resisted. So strongly did a Kendallville businessman feel that he offered $1,000 to have the courthouse moved, though it is not explained to whom the money was offered. In any event, the county seat is still in Albion and likely will forever remain.

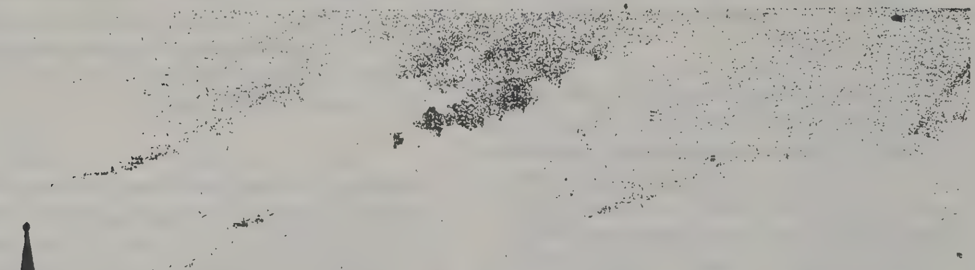
Nonetheless, industry thrived in Kendallville and Wayne Township where it elsewhere failed. Instead of the ephemeral grist and sawmills, the tanneries and the buggy shops, such firms as McCray refrigerator and Flint & Walling sank healthy roots in the soil and to this day are entrenched in the industrial family.

But it's a wonder that Kendallville, perhaps all Wayne Township didn't burn down. From 1855 to 1880 there were "disastrous conflagrations" which leveled "the foundry of Hildreth & Co., Iddings and Brown's stave factory, the Burnam House, the schoolhouse, a block of five buildings on Main St., south of William St. (net loss $6,000), a block of eight business buildings on Main St., north of William St. (net loss $16,000) a block of five business rooms south of Mitchell St. (net loss $7,000) the tannery of Draggoo & Oviatt, the Air Line House, and many private dwellings, some being elegant and costly."

Otherwise, the record of Kendallville's first fire department, "complete with hook and ladder", is quite unblemished.


OFFICE
BRADLEY HOUSE
C.W.DEL.

BRADLEY HOUSE
MRS S.A. BRADLEY, PROP. ALBION, NOBLE CO., IND.

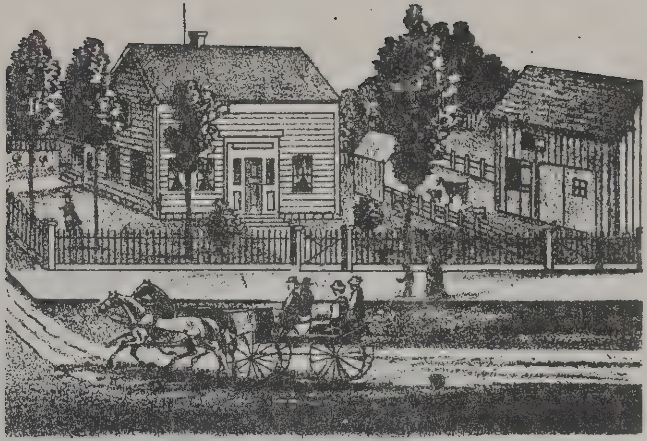


RES. OF WM C. WILLIAMS, ALBION, NOBLE CO., IND.

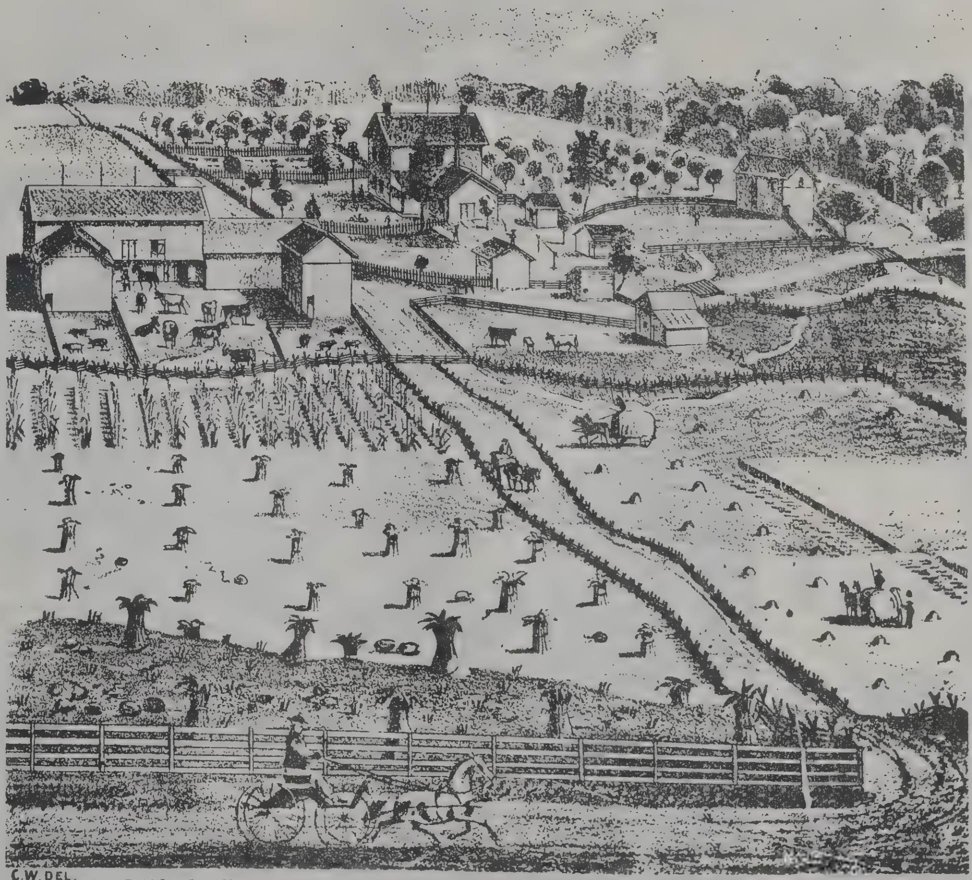
TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS

1874



RES OF **WILLIAM KNEPPER** WAWAKA IND.



RES. OF F.A.BLACK, SEC. 24, JEFFERSON TP., NOBLE CO., IND.

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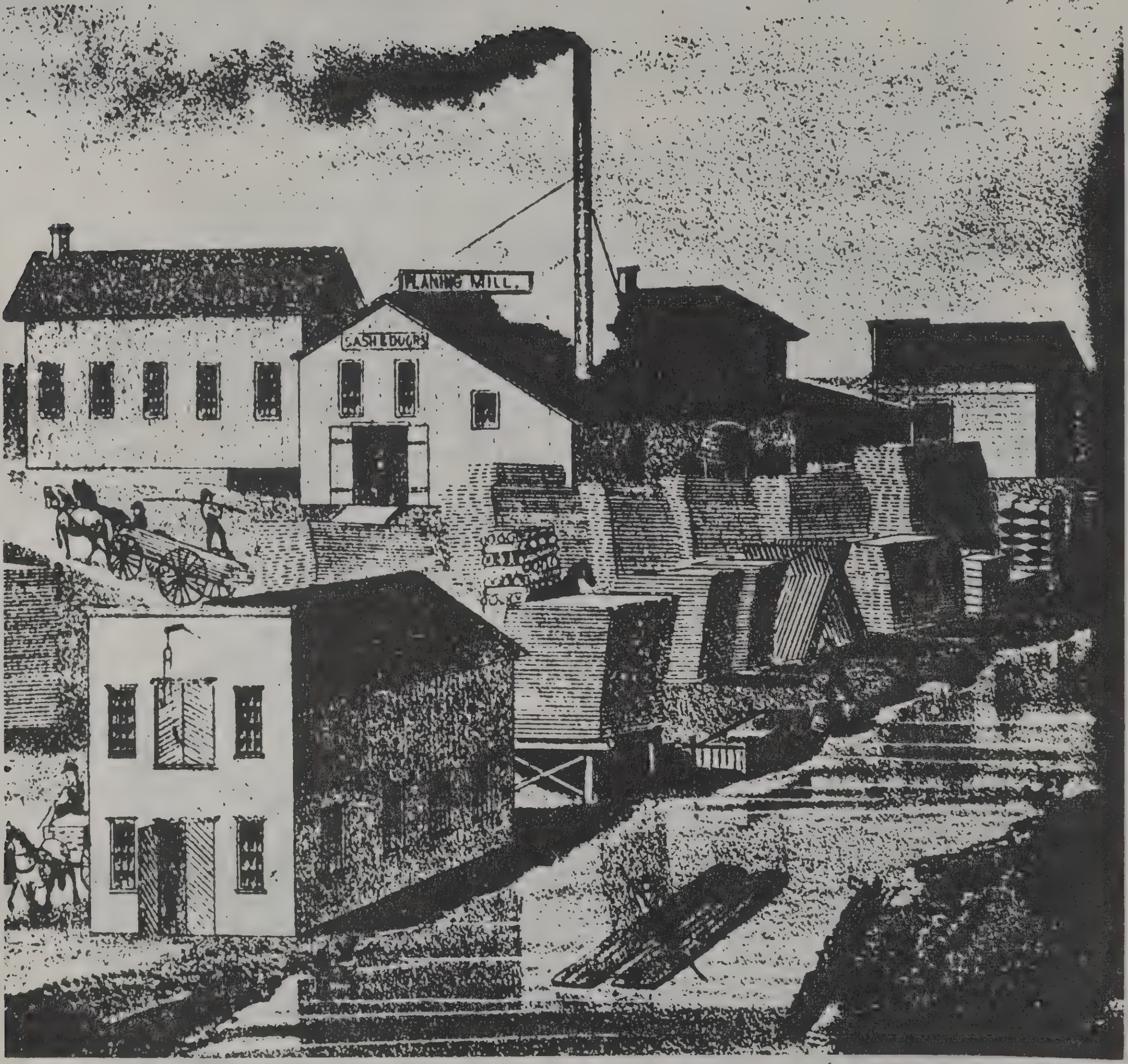
NELSON LE COUNT

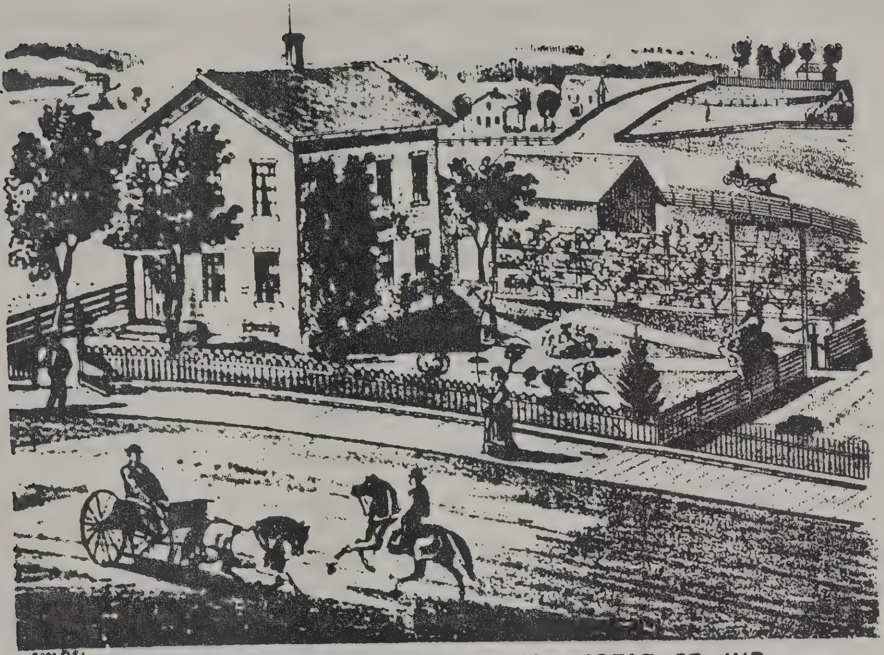
Owner and Manger

WAWAKA, INDIANA PHONE: 761-2702

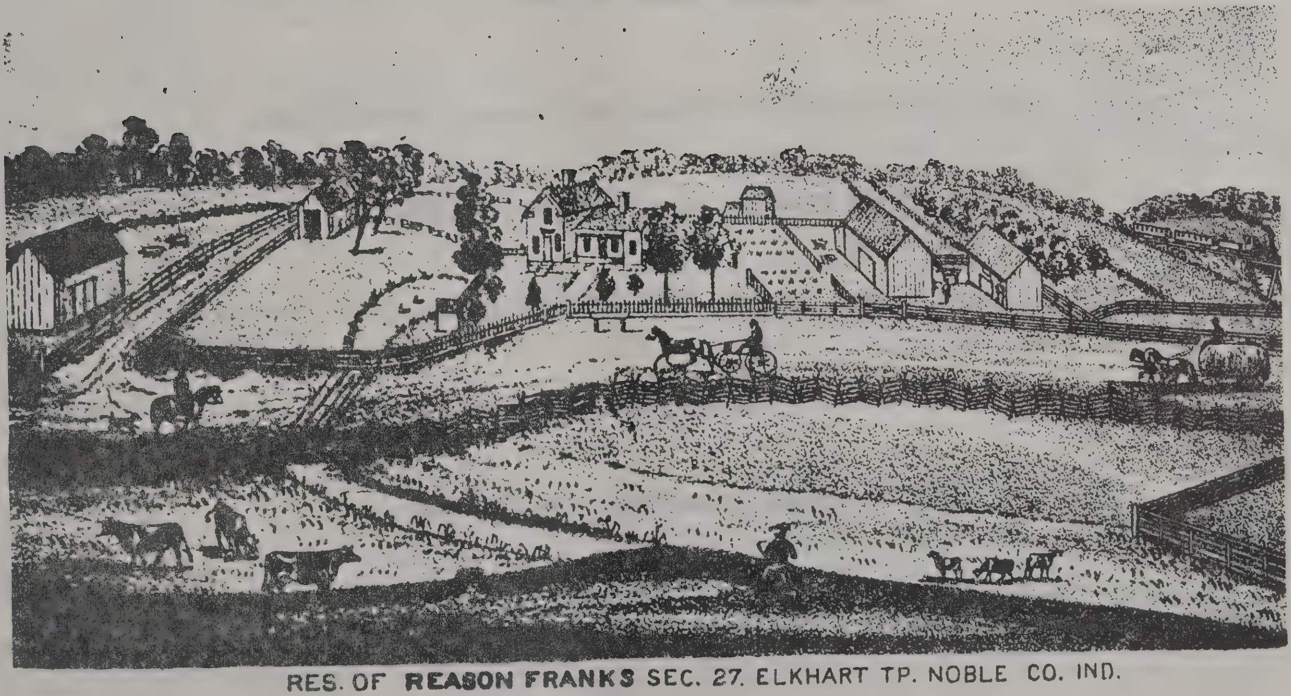

PLANING MILL.
SASH & DOORS

PLANING MILL of JOHN DEIBELE, WHOLESALE & RETAIL DEALER IN LUMBER, LATHS & SHINGLES & MANUFACTURER OF SASH, DOORS, BLINDS &c. KENDALLVILLE, IND.

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874



RES. OF **JAMES J. LASH**, ALBION, **NOBLE CO.**, IND.



RES. OF **REASON FRANKS** SEC. 27. ELKHART TP. NOBLE CO. IND.

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874

The

PASSAGE of YEARS

An historical pageant of Noble County, Indiana from prehistoric times to the present
depicted in a
PROCESSIONAL, PROLOGUE, EPILOGUE, and THREE EPISODES
through thirty scenes
with
Massed Bands and Choruses
at the
NOBLE COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS, KENDALLVILLE, INDIANA
August 17 and 20, 1966
Written, produced and scened
by
PAUL WARREN ASHBY

Co-Directors: Mrs. Margaret DeWitt, Mrs. Mary Turner, Mrs. Paul Smith, Mrs. Lesta Neal, Mrs. J. C. Palmer, Mrs. Mildred Rose, Mr. and Mrs. Maynard Peters, Mrs. Norma Reeve, Mrs. Quentin Stultz, Mrs. Larry Bowers, Mrs. Ronnie Winebrenner, Mrs. Joann Lawson, Mrs. Joan Klopfenstein, Mrs. Raymond Gross and others.

Band Directors: Mr. David Ehlers, Mr. Raymond Cole and others

Chorus Directors: Mrs. Irma Strong and others

Dances choreographed by: Bob Duesler, Janet Thomas and Cheryl Trowbridge

Costumes by co-directors and Mrs. A. Sprandel and the cast

Lights supplied by East Noble School Corporation

P. A. system supplied by the Fair Board.

Copyright 1966
Paul W. Ashby

FOREWORD

Because of limitations and dramatic requirements several of the scenes cover a span of many years. Such is the case with the scenes of the Regulators, the establishment of the courthouse and seat, the wars, etc.

As the county has always been affected by national happenings, it has been impossible to eliminate national events from the pageant.

Free use has been made of Goodrich's History of Indiana and Alvord's History of Northeast Indiana, and many other histories.

PROGRAM

Trumpet Fanfares.

Song - Noble County, Home Demonstration Chorus
Words by Mentor Herron

Stone's Trace, original poem read by Arthur Mapes
(In memory of Graydon Blue)

Band Numbers - an Overture and Processional

PROCESSIONAL:

Unit I	Mound Builders and Indians, Albion Twp.
Unit II	Trappers, Elkhart Twp.
Unit III	Prairie Schooner, Perry Twp.
Unit IV	Log Cabin, Washington Twp.
Unit V	Roads and Canal,
Unit VI	Railroads, Green Twp.
Unit VII	Regulators, York Twp.
Unit VIII	Civil War,
Unit IX	Agricultural Growth, Jefferson Twp.
Unit X	Chautauqua, Orange Twp.
Unit XI	Industrial Growth,
Unit XII	First World War, Allen Twp.
Unit XIII	The Great Depression, Sparta Twp.
Unit XIV	Second World War, Swan Twp.
Unit XV	The Atomic Age,

Fanfares

Chorus - Mapes song of Indiana Dreams

Indiana, Original poem read by Arthur Mapes

Fanfares

PROLOGUE:

Narrators: Robert Zehr, Bernard Smith -
(These two narrate the entire pageant.)

Scene I	The Mound Builders, Albion Twp.
Scene II	Indians, Albion Twp.
Scene III	The Trappers, First White Men, Elkhart Twp.

EPISODE I

Scene I	Joel Bristol builds the first house in Noble County. Ligonier.
Scene II	David Bundle and Frances Bingman exchange money, and a tavern is opened.
Scene III	An early Church, Elkhart Twp.
Scene IV	The Plank Road, Swan Twp.
Scene V	The Canal
Scene VI	Establishment of County Seat, Jefferson Twp.
Scene VII	The Regulators, York Twp.
Scene VIII	A Square Dance - Bob Duesler's Dancers
Scene IX	An old school, Spelling match, Allen Twp.
Scene X	Mitchell and Minot Build a Railroad, Green Twp.

Fanfares

EPISODE II

Scene I	The Civil War, Allen Twp.
Scene II	Dance - Bob Duesler's Dancers
Scene III	Agricultural Growth, Jefferson Twp.
Scene IV	Industrial Growth
Scene V	Panic of 1893, York Twp.
Scene VI	Dance of 1890's, Kendallville Group
Scene VII	The Chautauqua, Orange Twp. and the Albion H. S. Band
Scene VIII	First World War, Allen Twp.
Scene IX	Dancers - The Charleston

Fanfares

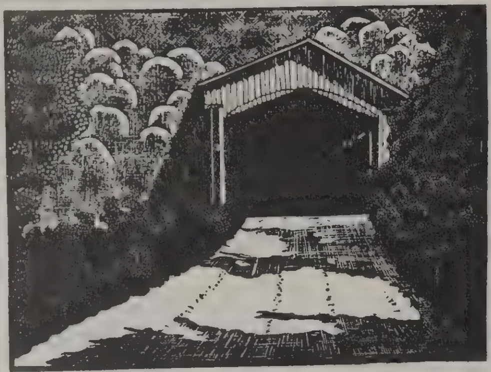
EPISODE III

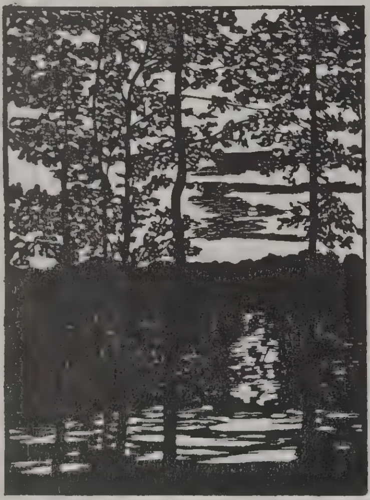
Scene I	A Night Club, 1920's - A Square Dance
Scene II	The Panic of 1929, Sparta Twp.
Scene III	World War Two - Voices, darkened stage Allen Twp.
Scene IV	A Dance, Kendallville Group
Scene V	The Atomic Age - Queen and Court

EPILOGUE:

Prelude to Finale: Back Home in Indiana
High School Choruses

Finale: This Is Your Land, Massed Choruses





INDIANA DREAMS

Dreams are like shadows, they come
When sunbeams depart,
When day is done
Sweet dreams of home
Creep through the blue of my heart.

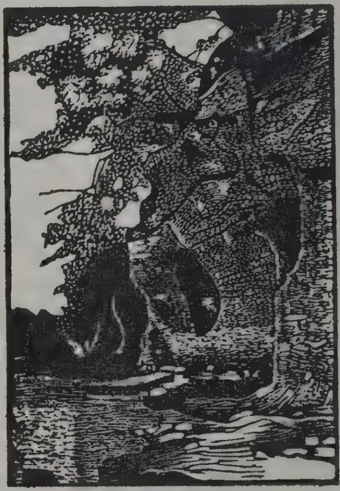
Chorus:-

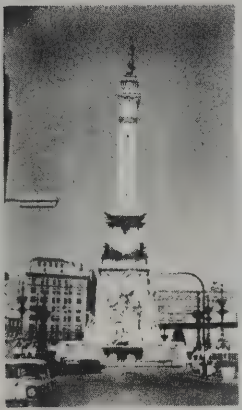
When my Indiana Dreams come true,
I'll be home under Blue Hoosier skies
All these Indiana dreams of you
Make me long for my blue paradise
Some sunny day in June,
When rambling roses bloom,
We'll plan an Indiana honeymoon.
Love will gleam in a pair of blue eyes,
When my Indiana Dreams come true.

Arthur Franklin Mapes

Top Row: Tunnelton Bridge, Lawrence Co.; Indianapolis Public Library; World War I Memorial, Indpls.: State House; Second Presbyterian Church, Indpls; Mill, Spring Mill State Park
Upper Middle Row: Lake James, Pokagon State Park; Holcomb Memorial Carrillon, Indpls.; Soldiers-Sailors Monument, Indpls.; Mill Creek, St. Paul
Lower Middle Row; Gene Stratton-Porter Mem. Rome City; Seven Pillars of Mississinewa, Peru; Night in the Dunes, Lake Michigan; Grouselands, Vincennes
Bottom Row: Union Building, Ind. U.; Delta Queen, Madison; Scottish Rite Cathedral, Indpls.; Clowes Memorial Hall, Indpls.; Federal Bldg., Indpls.; Cabin, Brown Co. St. Park.

Photography and Block Prints by Paul W. Ashby, Kendallville, Ind.





INDIANA

Official State Poem adapted March 11, 1963 by the 93rd session of the General Assembly.

God crowned her hills with beauty,
Gave her lakes and winding streams,
Then He edged them all with woodlands
As the setting for our dreams.

Lovely are her moonlit rivers,
Shadowed by the sycamores,
Where the fragrant winds of Summer
Play along the willowed shores

I must roam those wooded hillsides,
I must heed the native call,
For a Pagan voice within me
Seems to answer to it all.

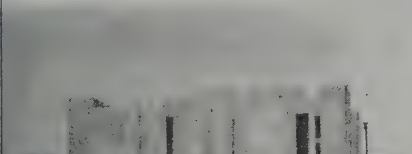
I must walk where squirrels scamper
Down a rustic old rail fence,
Where a choir of birds is singing
In the woodland . . . green and dense.

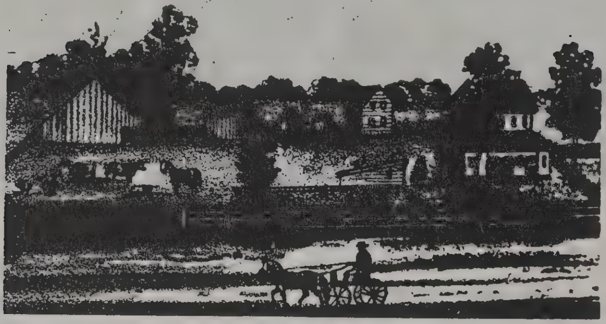
I must learn more of my homeland
For it's paradise to me,
There's no haven quite as peaceful
There's no place I'd rather be.

Indiana . . . is a garden
Where the seeds of peace have grown,
Where each tree, and vine, and flower
Has a beauty . . . all its own.

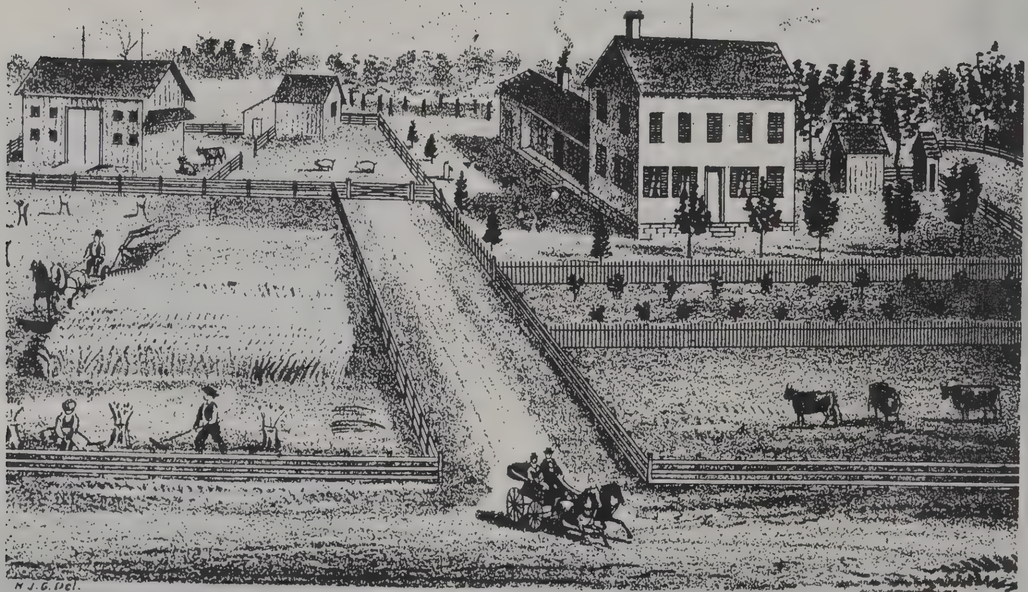
Lovely are the fields and meadows,
That reach out to hills that rise
Where the dreamy Wabash River
Wanders on . . . through paradise.

Arthur Franklin Mapes



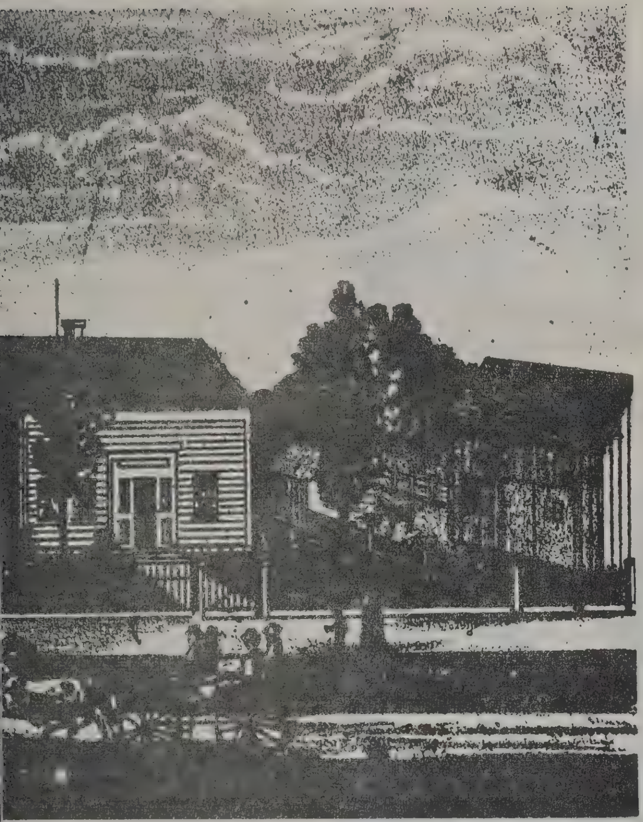


RES.OF **GIDEON SCHLOTTERBACK** SEC.33, PERRY TP. NOBLE CO.IND
The house in the back ground with 4 windows was erected in 1832 & Used as a Court House for a number of Years.

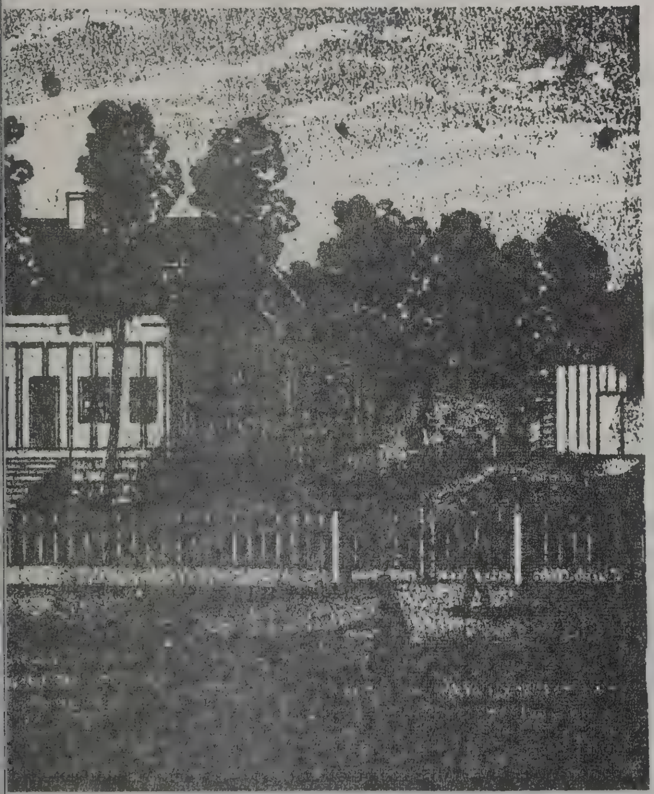


RESIDENCE OF **W. H. GERVER,** SEC. 16, ELKHART TP.

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874



OF WILLIAM KNEPPER WAWAKA IND.



[illegible] WAWAKA IND.

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874

ST. JAMES

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FINE FOOD

YOUR FAVORITE BEVERAGE

Avilla, Indiana Phone: 897-9135

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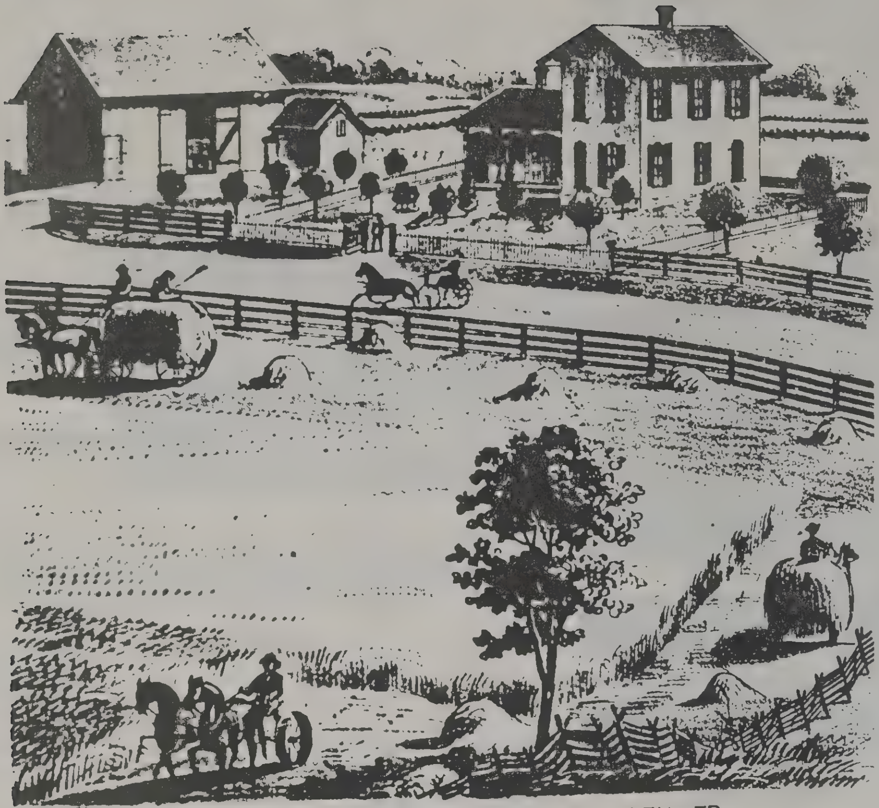
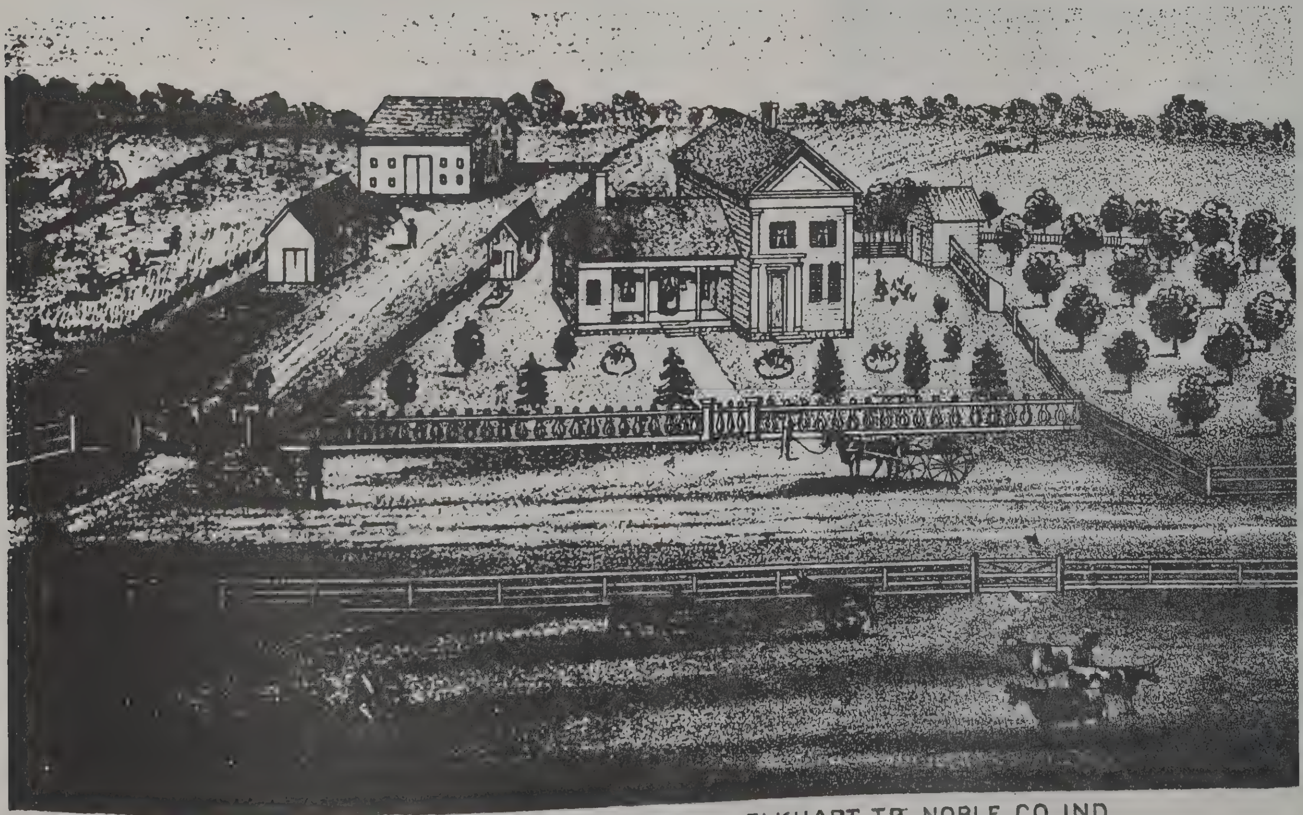


RES. OF **JOSIAH DARROW,** SEC. 12, ALLEN TP.



RES OF **GEORGE SWANK** SEC. 17 ELKHART TP. NOBLE CO. IND.

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208 CAVIN LIGONIER, INDIANA

Noble County
Saddle Club

ALBION, INDIANA

Diehl's Sporting Goods

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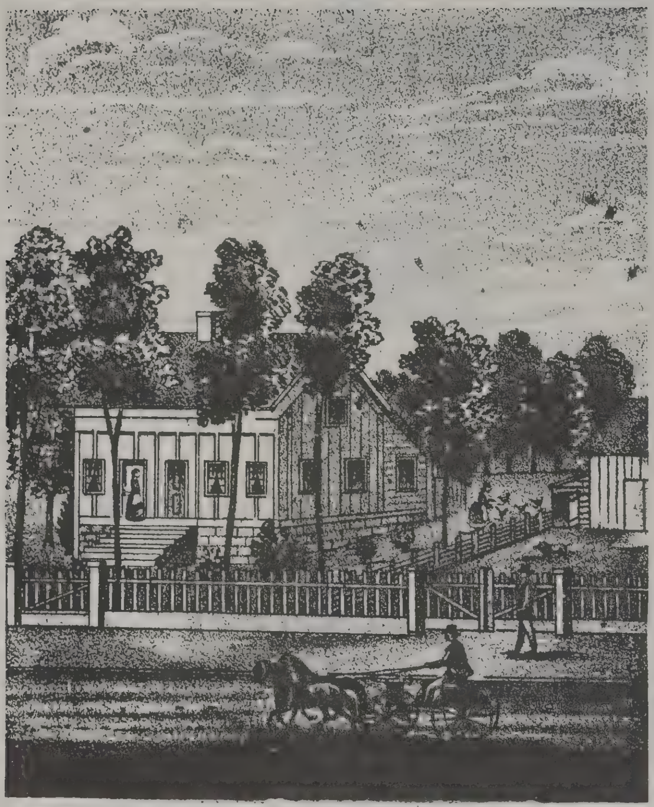
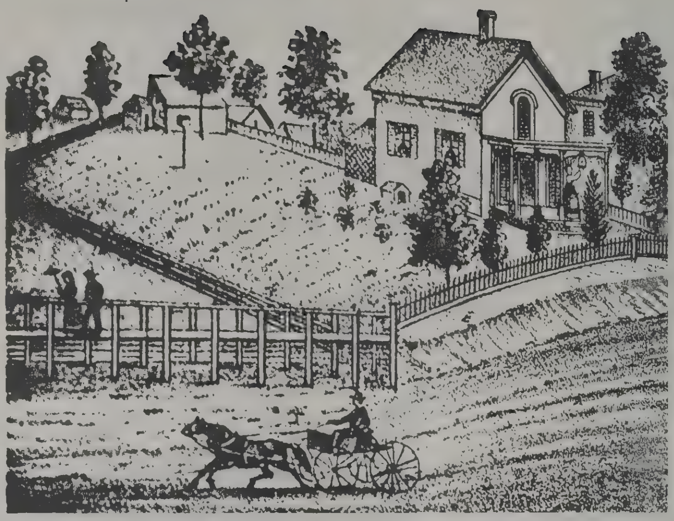


RES. OF **S.P. VANAKIN**, WAWAKA IND.



RES. OF **PHILIP WOLFF** KENDALLVILLE IND.

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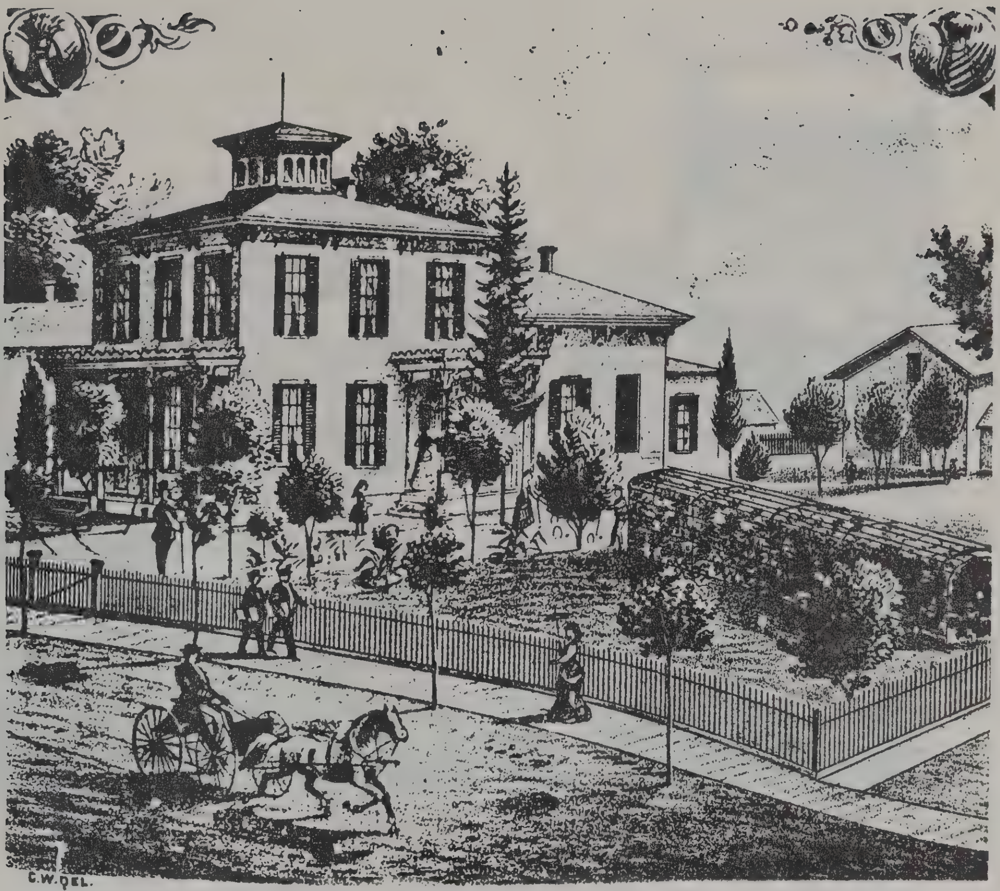
YORKSHIRES - The Most Popular Hog, the World Over
Quality Breeding Stock for Sale

John C. Palmer and Sons

ALBION, INDIANA



RES. OF L. F. HITCHCOCK, KENDALLVILLE, IND.

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874

SHULL'S

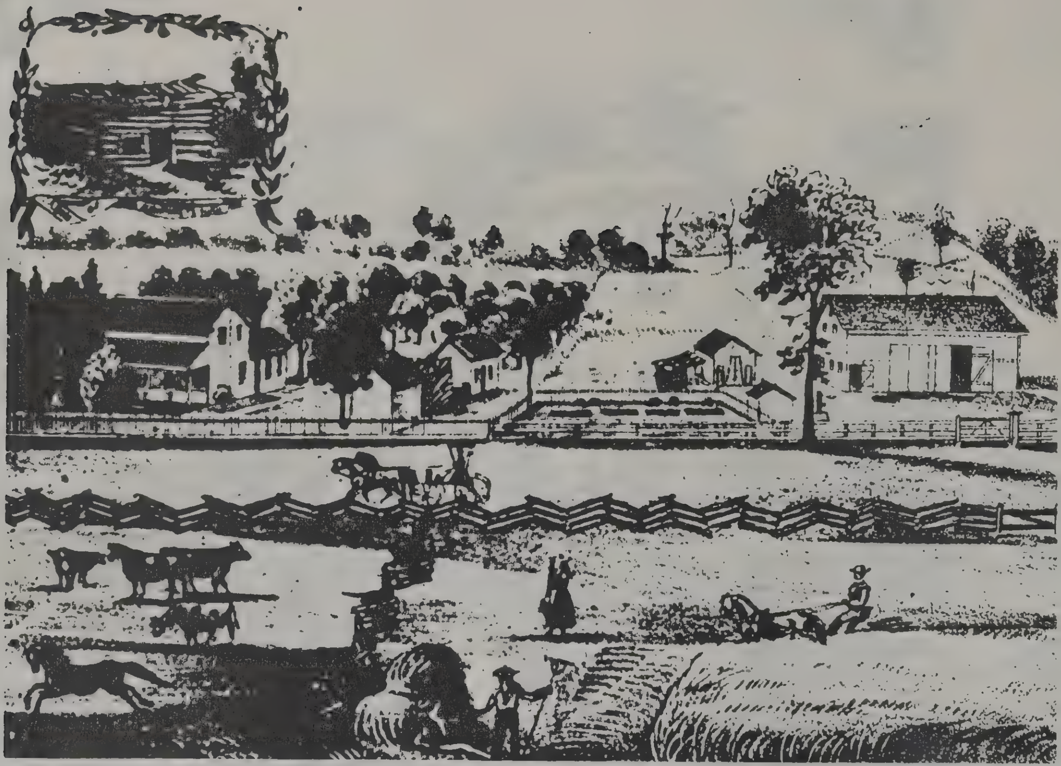
LAKE RIDGE ORCHARDS

Rome City, Indiana

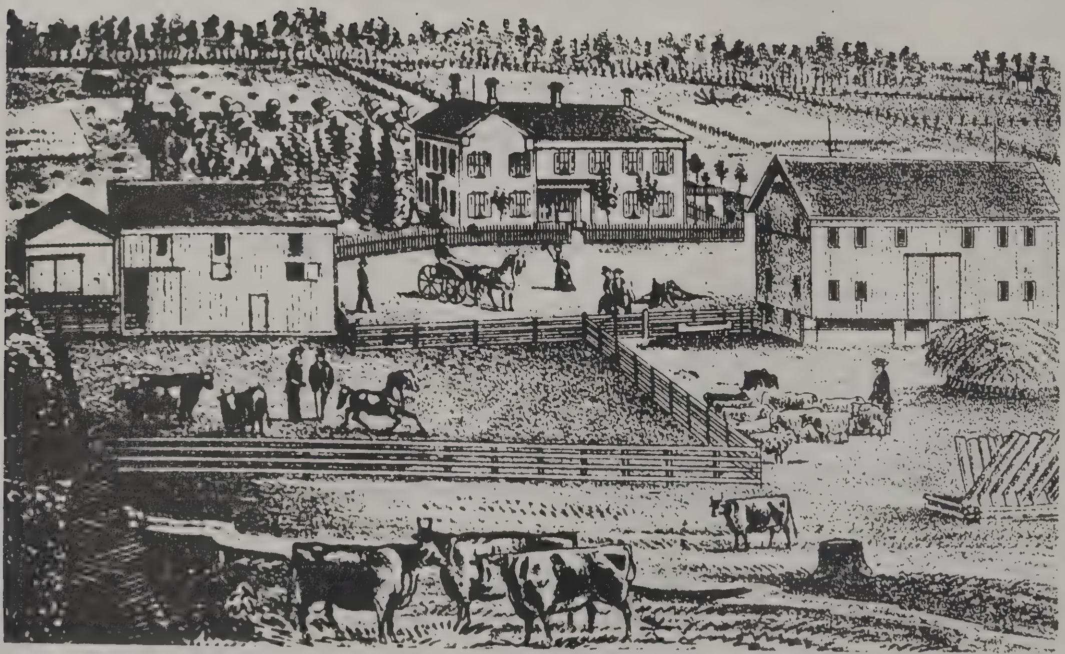
QUALITY FRUIT FOR HALF A CENTURY

APPLES--PEACHES--PEARS--PLUMS--CHERRIES

ROADSIDE MARKET IN ROME CITY

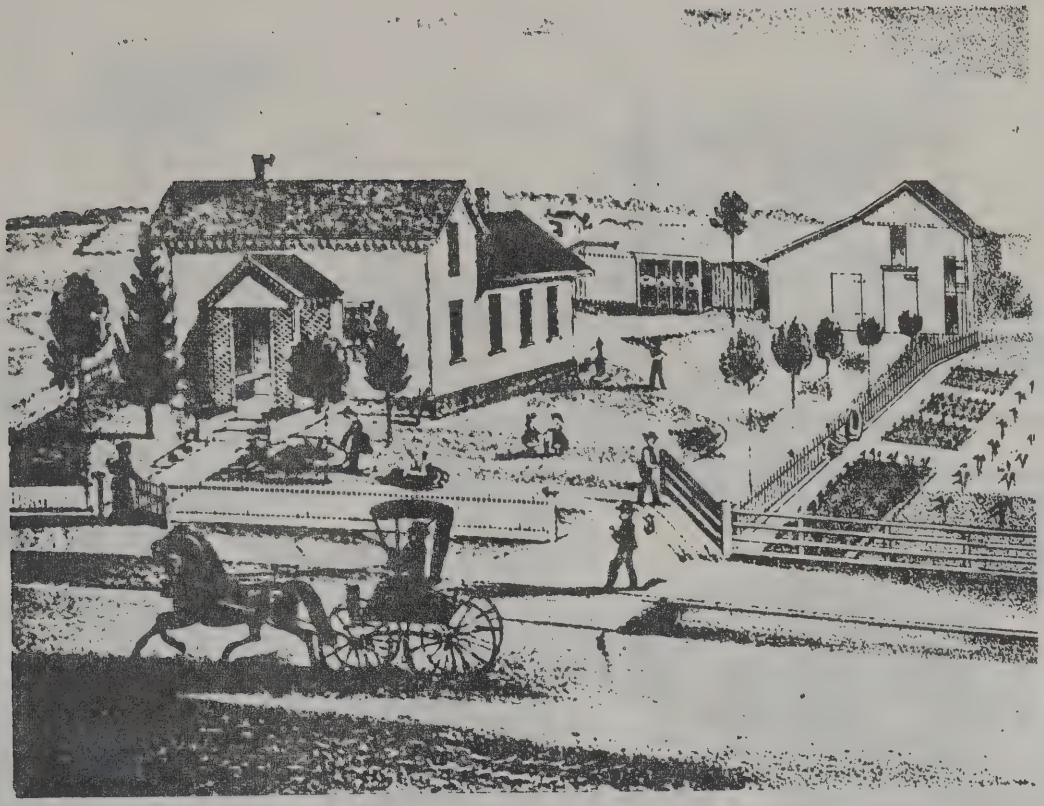


FARM RES. OF **A. HUMPHREYS**, SEC. 8, NOBLE TP, **NOBLE CO.**, IND.

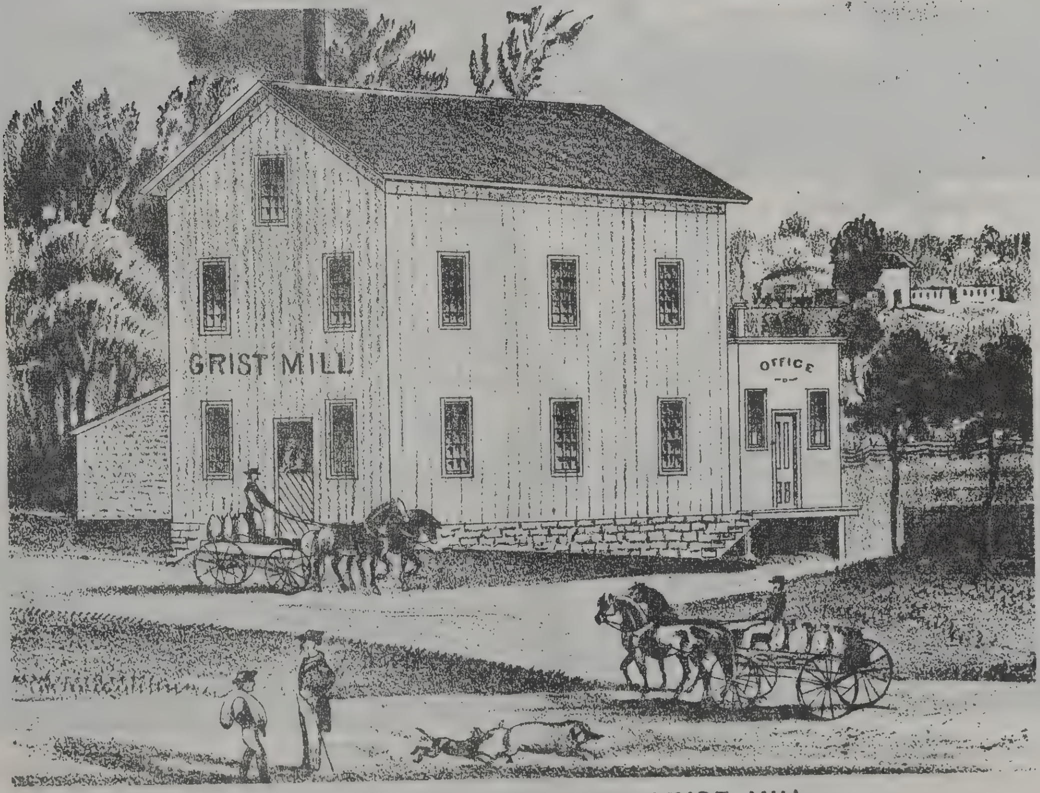


RESIDENCE OF **H. C. STANLEY**, SEC. 3, GREEN TP.

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874

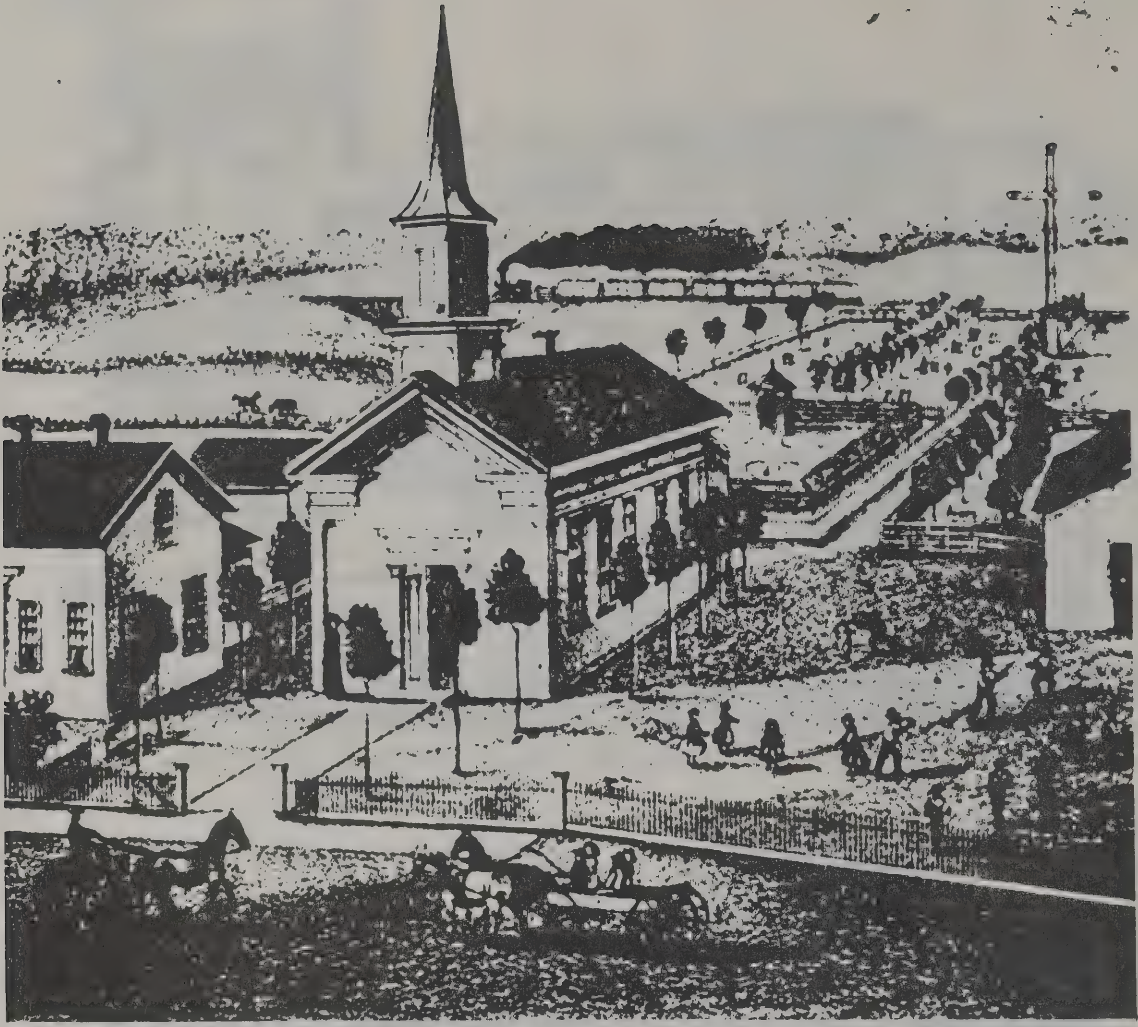


RES. OF **ROBT TAYLOR**, SWAN STATION, **NOBLE CO.**, IND.

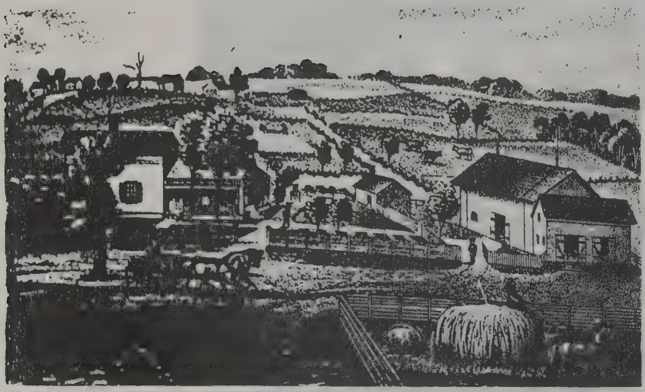


WILLITS BROS. & COS GRIST MILL.
ALL WORK IN OUR LINE PROMPTLY ATTENDED TO.
CASH PAID FOR WHEAT &c.

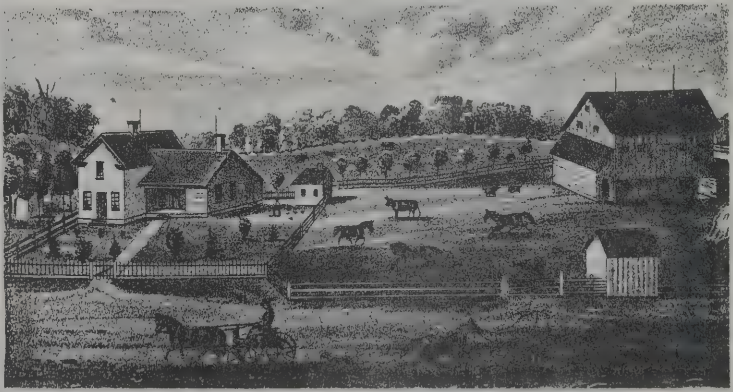
TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874



ST MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH AVILLA NOBLE CO. IND REV. FATHER D DUEHMIG PASTOR.

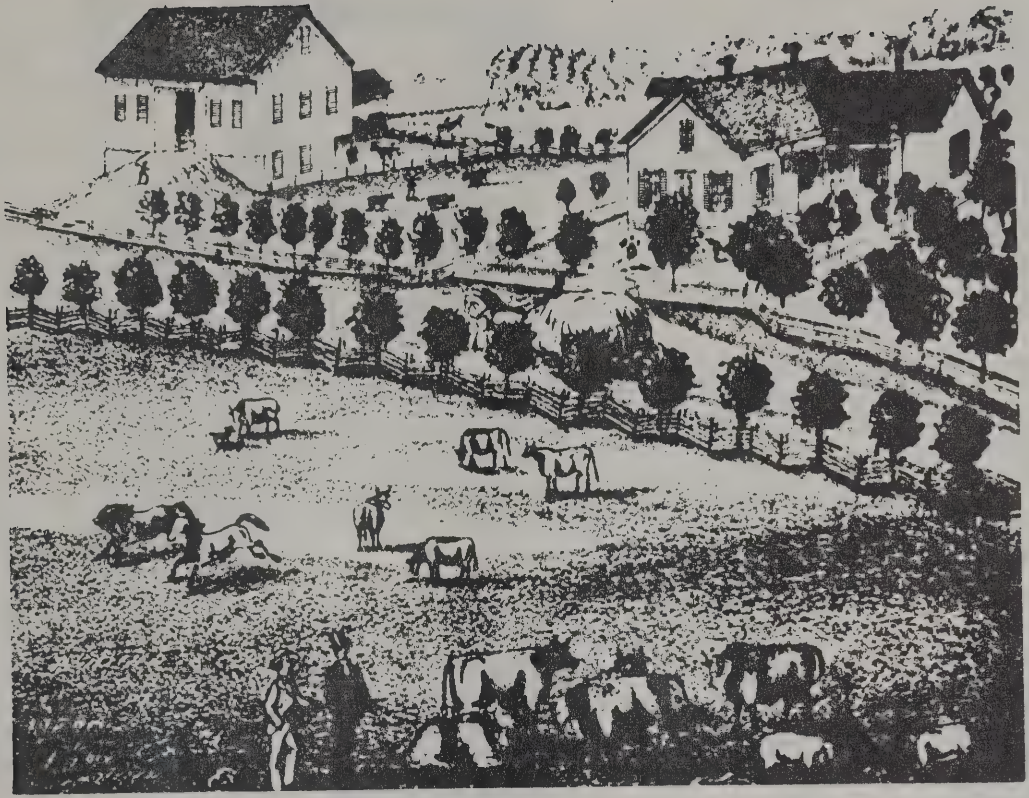


RES. OF Wm BLISS, BRIMFIELD, IND.

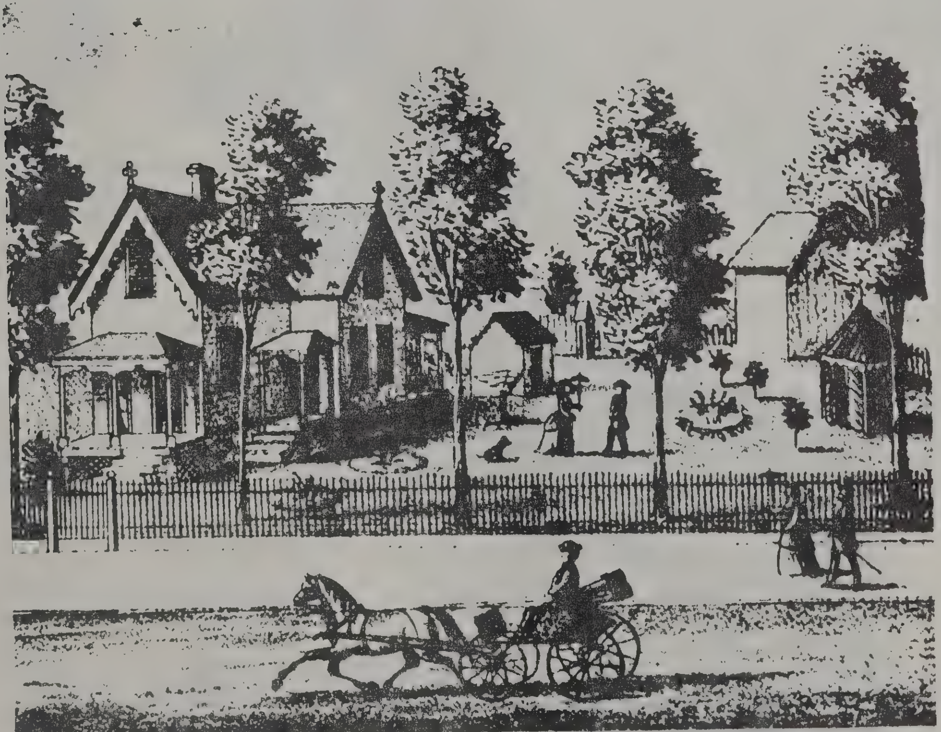


RES OF WILLIAM ROSE, SEC. 21, ELKHART TP.

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874



RESIDENCE OF JOHN WIBLE SEC 8 ALLEN TP NOBLE CO IND



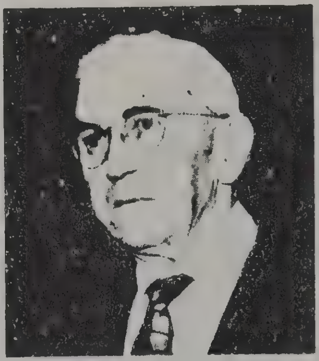
RESIDENCE OF J. D. WEATHERFORD, KENDALLVILLE, IND.

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874

RE-ELECT

ELLSWORTH NEWMAN

DEMOCRATIC
CANDIDATE
FOR
COUNTY ASSESSOR



Re-Elect

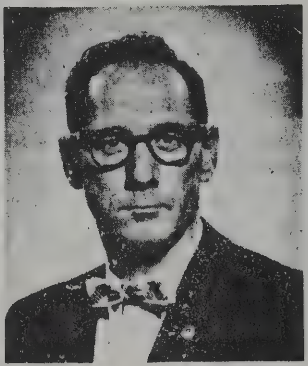
T. J. MAWHORTER

COUNTY COUNCILMAN
AT LARGE

Re-Elect

ANDREW M. MILNAR

County Councilman
at Large



Re-Elect

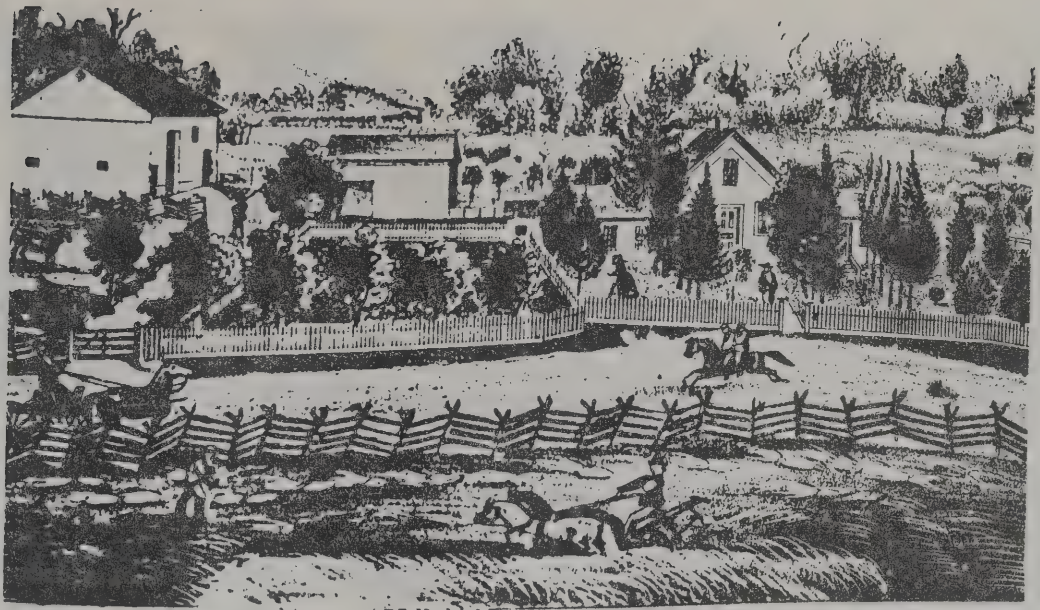
GERALD W. POTEE

County Councilman
at
Large

Re-Elect

JAMES E. STUMP

Commissioner
First District



RES. OF P. C. ISBELL, SEC. 35, WAYNE TP.
PATENTEE & MANUFTR. OF TRUSSESS & ABDOMINAL SUPPORTERS, ALSO ELASTIC TRUSSESS FOR MALES & FEMALES BOTH ADULTS & CHILDREN SHOULDER BRACES & SPINAL SUPPORTERS KEPT CONSTANTLY ON HAND.
ALL WORK WARRANTED.
KENDALLVILLE IND., MITCHELL BLOCK, No 1.

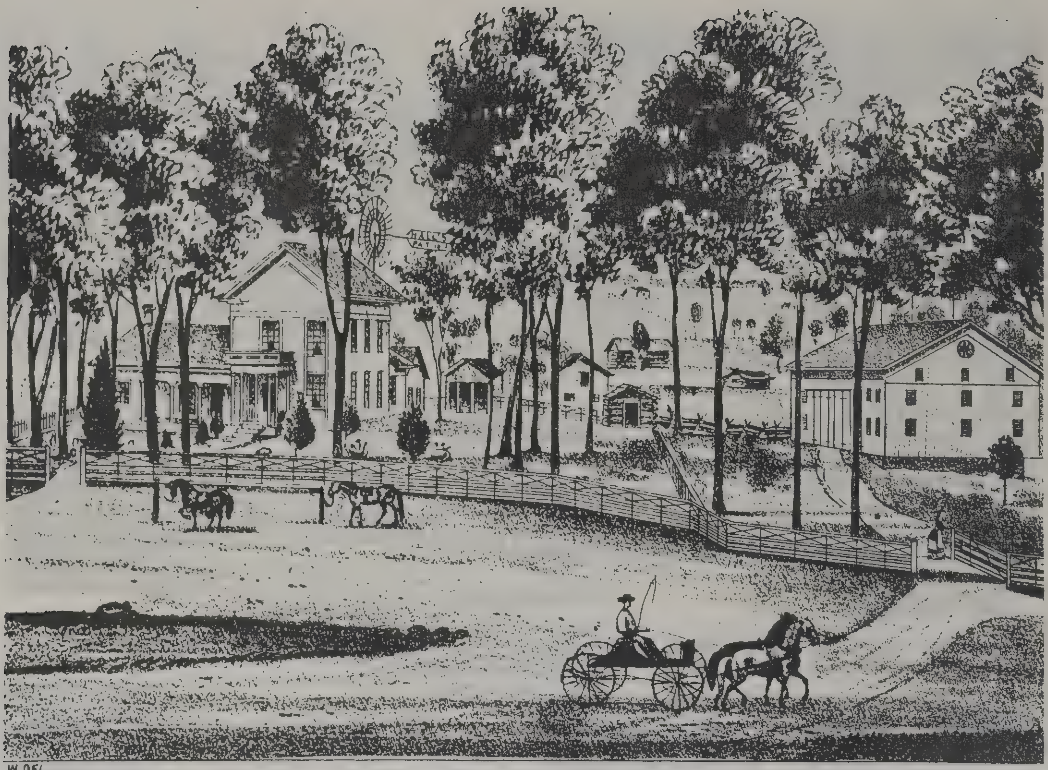
TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874

Production Credit Association

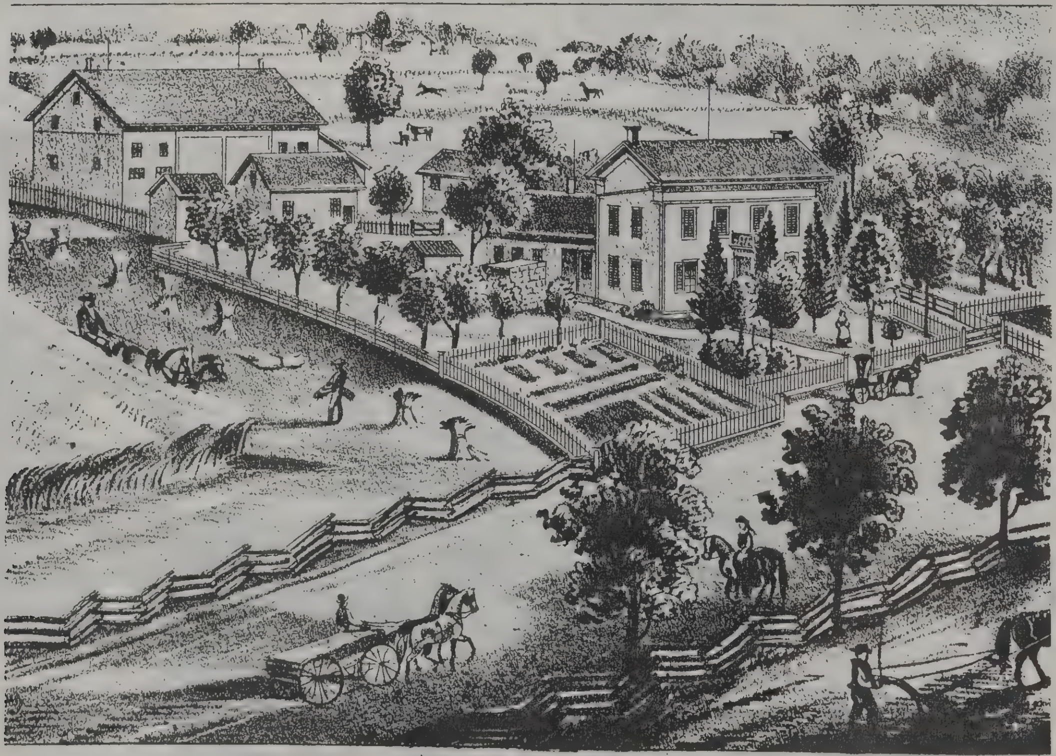
SERVICE TO FARM FAMILIES FOR OVER

33 YEARS

ALBION, INDIANA

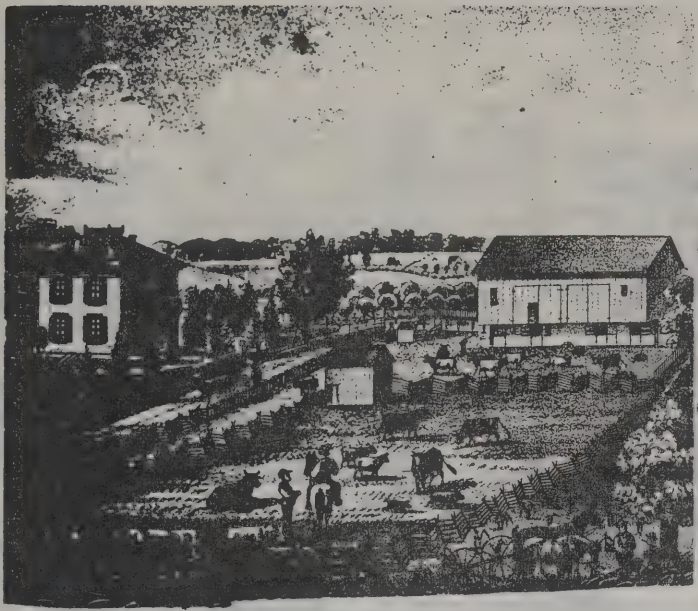


RES OF D^r^ **ELIAS JONES,** SEC. 6, NOBLE TP., LOG CABEN BUILT 1832

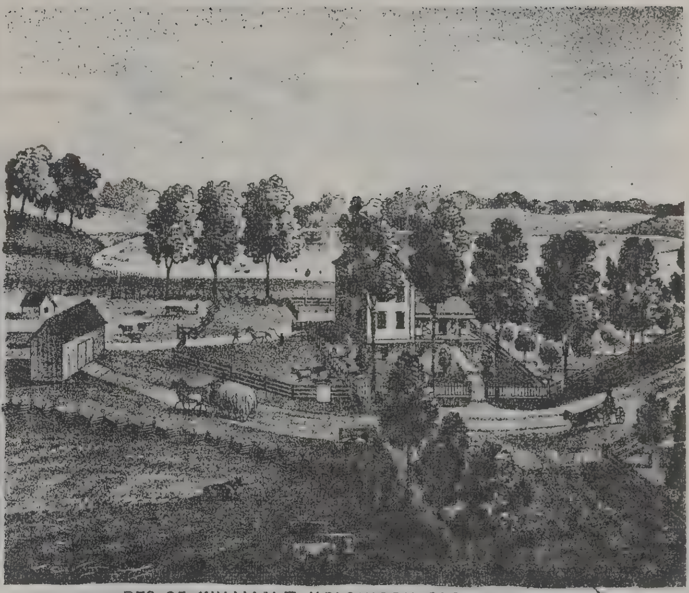


RES. OF **J. J. KNOX,** SEC. 34, ELKHART TP.

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874



RES. OF M. H. KIMMEL



RES OF WILLIAM T. HOLSINGER, SEC. 2. ELKHART TP.

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874

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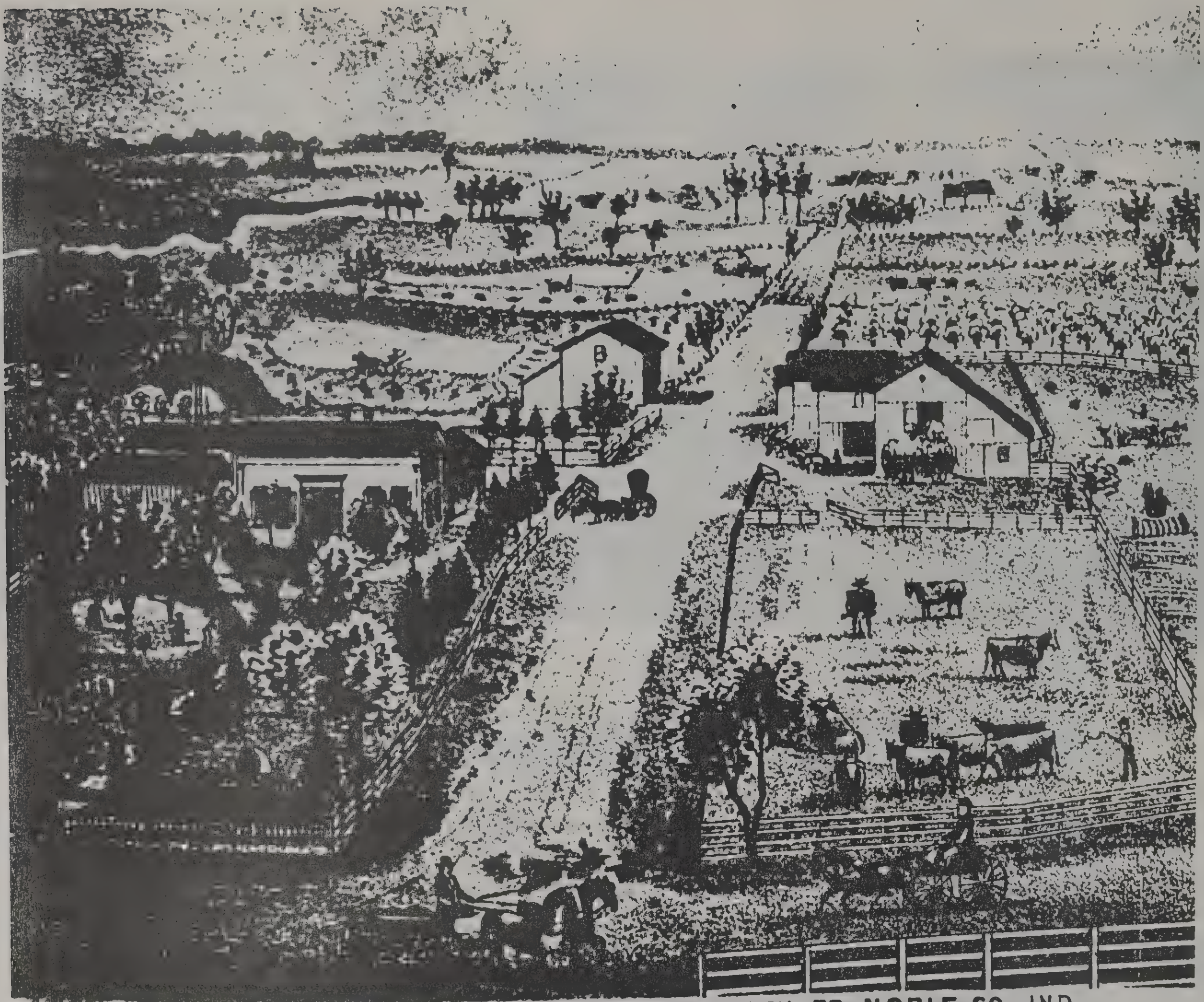
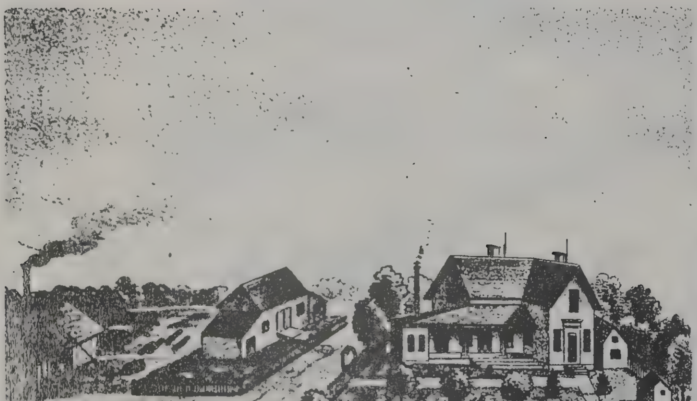
U. S. HIGHWAY 6

SERVING YOU BETTER

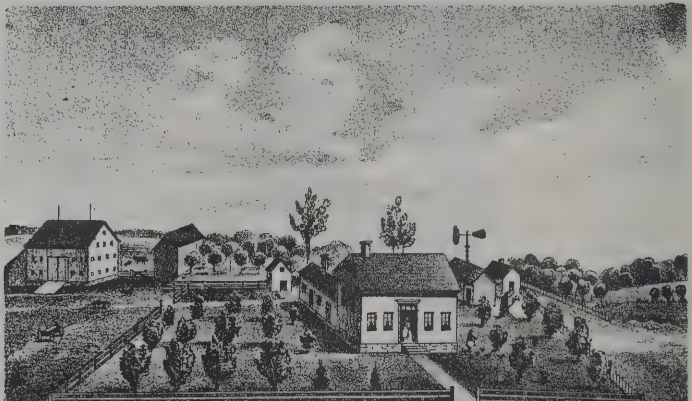
SERVING YOU BOTH



FARM RES. OF H. H. WHEELER, SEC. 31, ALLEN TP. NOBLE CO., IND.
BREEDER OF SHORTHORN DURHAMS.

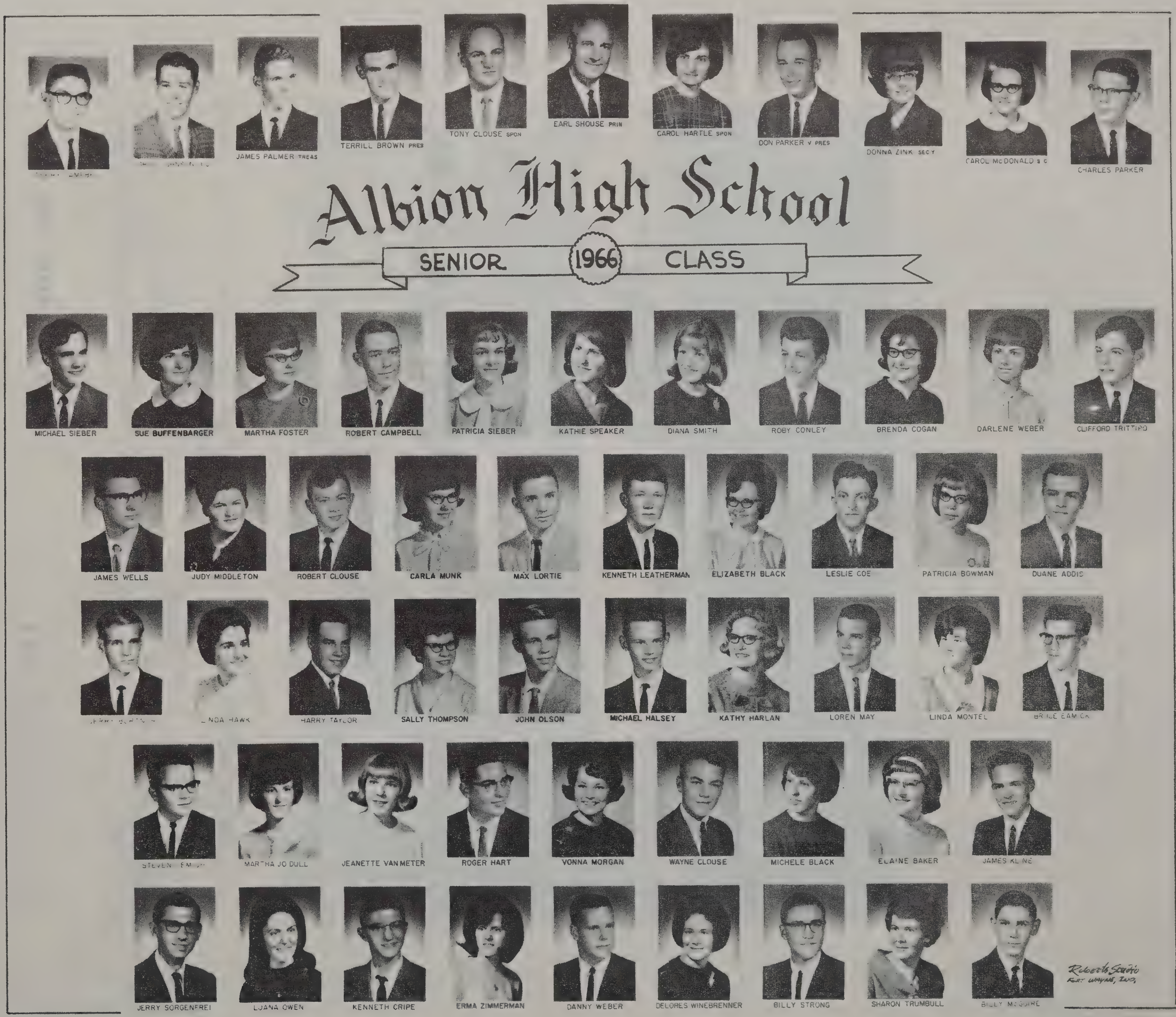


RES. & SAW MILL OF M. M. DODGE, WAWAKA, IND.



RES. OF ISAAC PANCAKE, SEC. 9, ELKHART TP.,

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874

Albion High School
SENIOR 1966 CLASS
[illegible]
[illegible]
JAMES PALMER TREAS
TERRILL BROWN PRES
TONY CLOUSE SPON
EARL SHOUSE PRIN
CAROL HARTLE SPON
DON PARKER V PRES
DONNA ZINK SEC'Y
CAROL McDONALD S C
CHARLES PARKER
MICHAEL SIEBER
SUE BUFFENBARGER
MARTHA FOSTER
ROBERT CAMPBELL
PATRICIA SIEBER
KATHIE SPEAKER
DIANA SMITH
ROBY CONLEY
BRENDA COGAN
DARLENE WEBER
CLIFFORD TRITTIPO
JAMES WELLS
JUDY MIDDLETON
ROBERT CLOUSE
CARLA MUNK
MAX LORTIE
KENNETH LEATHERMAN
ELIZABETH BLACK
LESLIE COE
PATRICIA BOWMAN
DUANE ADDIS
JERRY [illegible]
LINDA HAWK
HARRY TAYLOR
SALLY THOMPSON
JOHN OLSON
MICHAEL HALSEY
KATHY HARLAN
LOREN MAY
LINDA MONTEL
BRICE EAMICK
STEVEN [illegible]
MARTHA JO DULL
JEANETTE VAN METER
ROGER HART
VONNA MORGAN
WAYNE CLOUSE
MICHELE BLACK
ELAINE BAKER
JAMES KLINE
JERRY SORGENFREI
LUANA OWEN
KENNETH CRIPE
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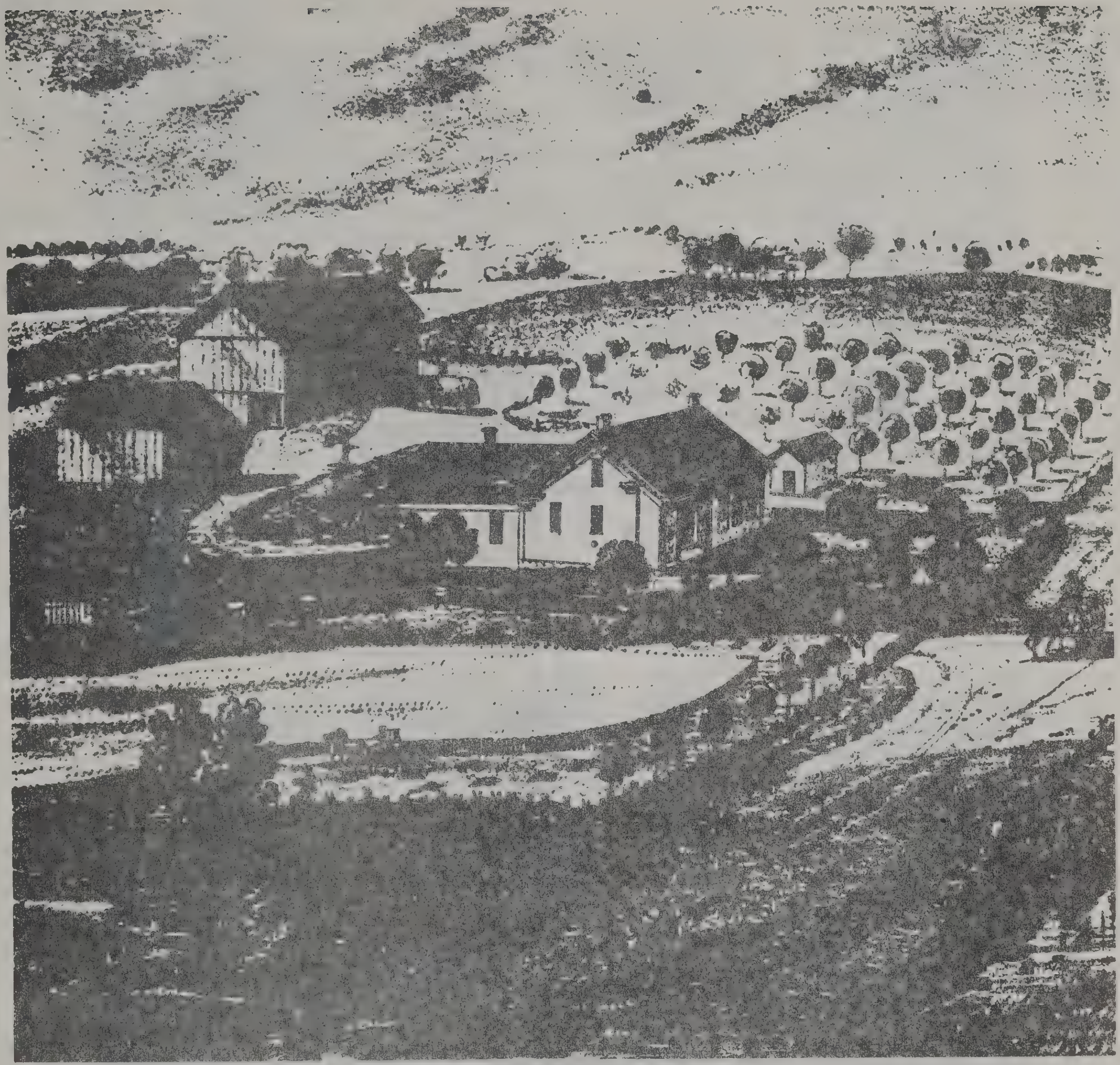

RES. OF HENRY WALTMAN, SEC. 19, ALLEN TP., NOBLE CO., IND.

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874

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of

Albion, Indiana

Compliments of

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BANK AND TRUST

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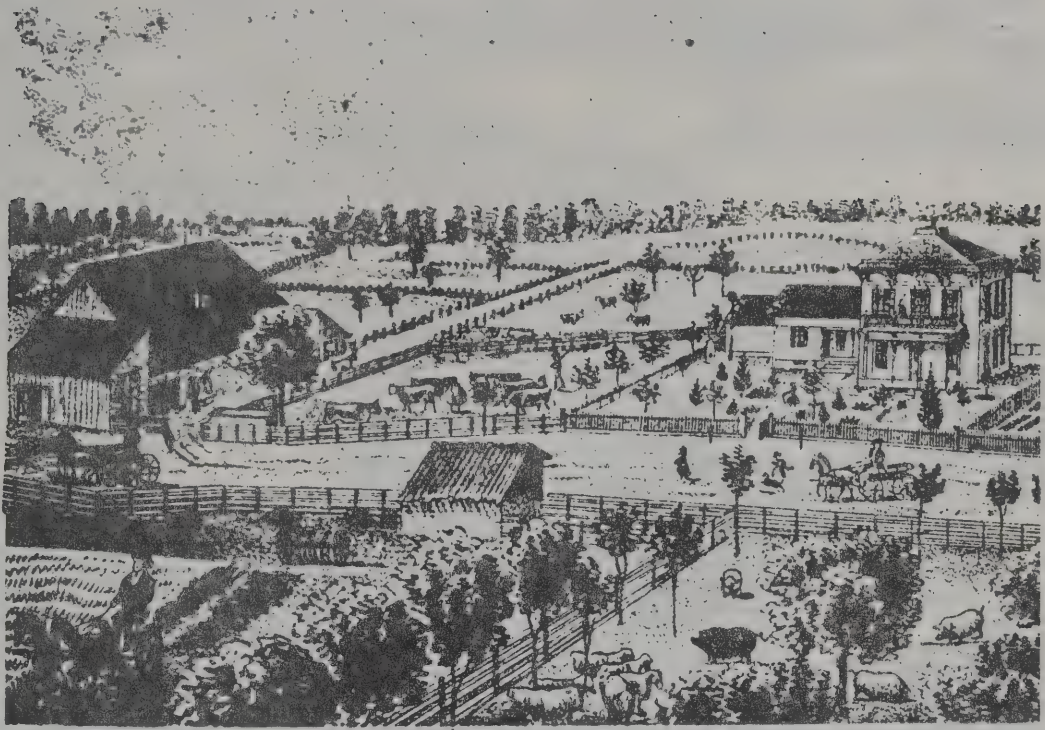
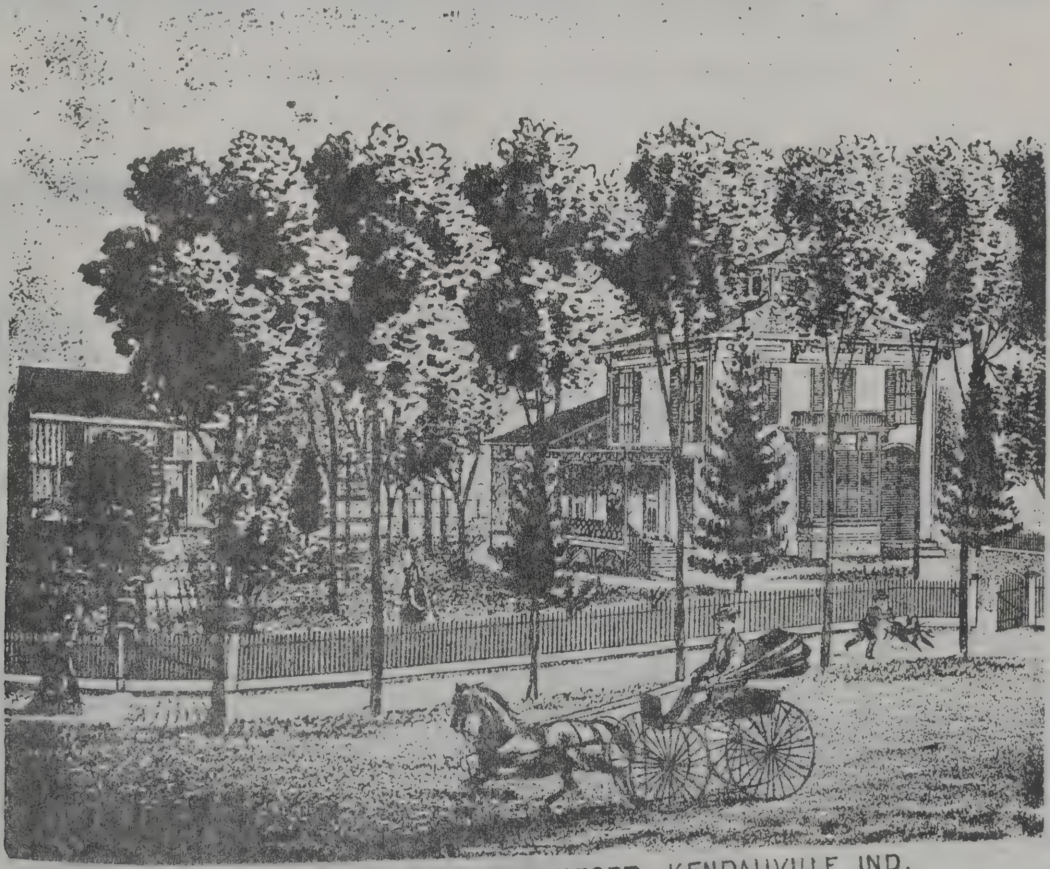
Kendallville, Ind.

MEMBER F.D.I.C.

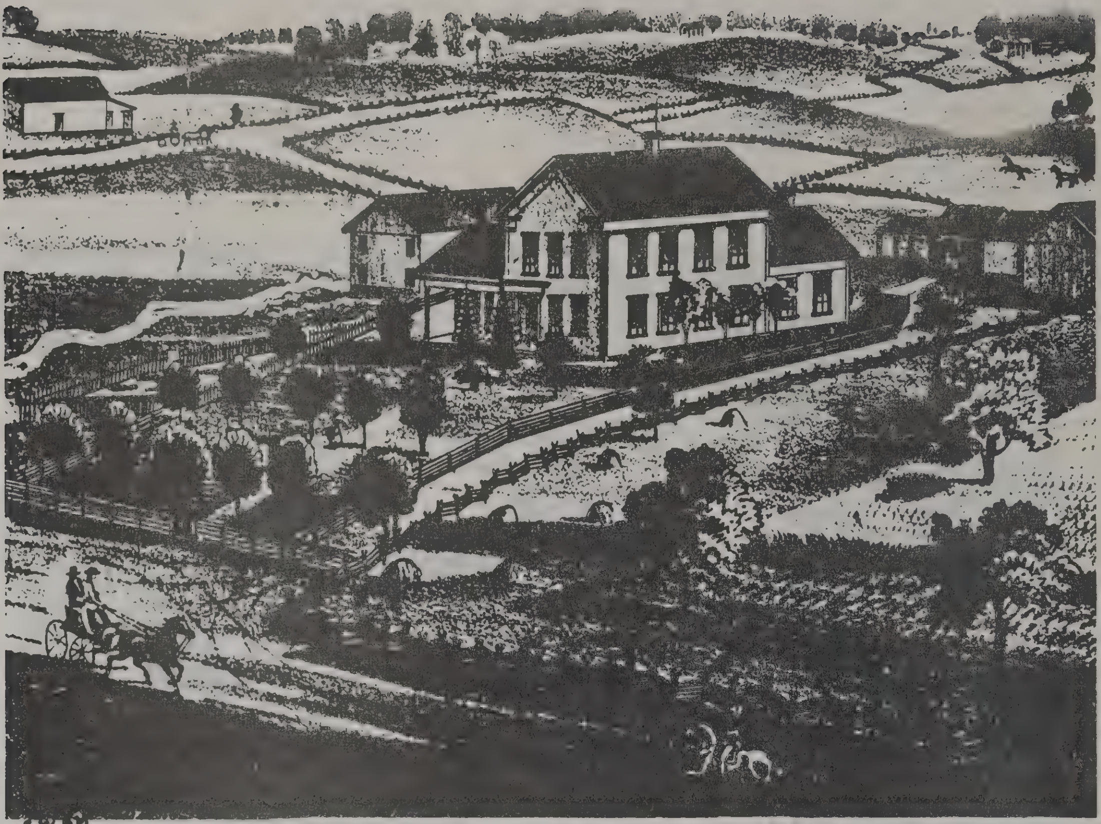


FARM & RESIDENCE OF Wm HUSTON, SECS 5&6 JEFFERSON TP, NOBLE CO., IND.



RESIDENCE OF HERMAN KRUEGER, KENDALLVILLE, IND.

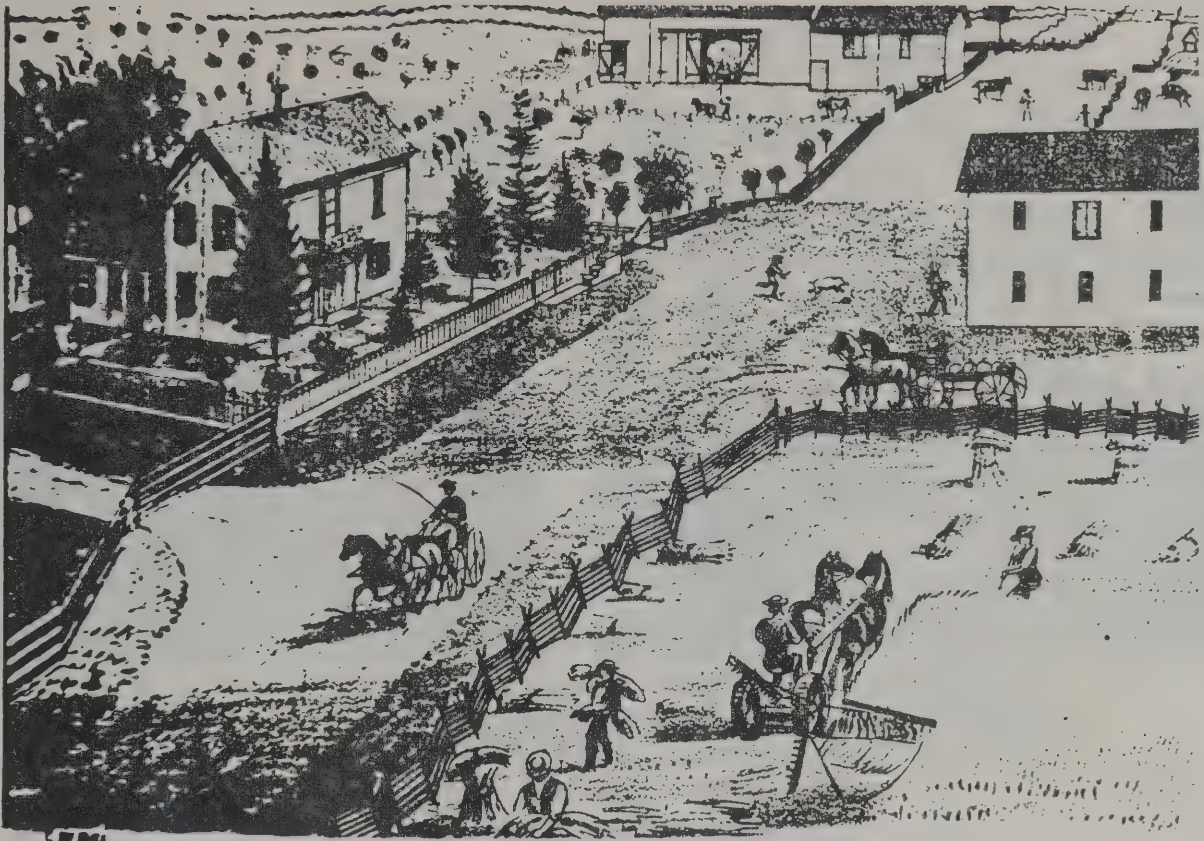
TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874



RES. OF W^m WHITFORD, SEC. 10, ALLEN TP., NOBLE CO., IND.

RES. OF EPHRAIM MYERS, ESQ., SEC. 20, ALLEN TP. NOBLE CO., IND.

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874



RES OF A.D. WHITFORD, SEC. 2, ALLEN TP, NOBLE CO., IND.
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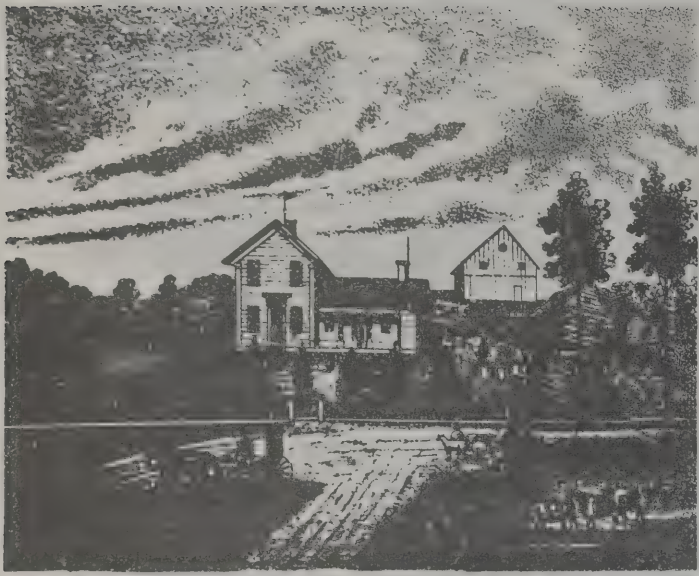
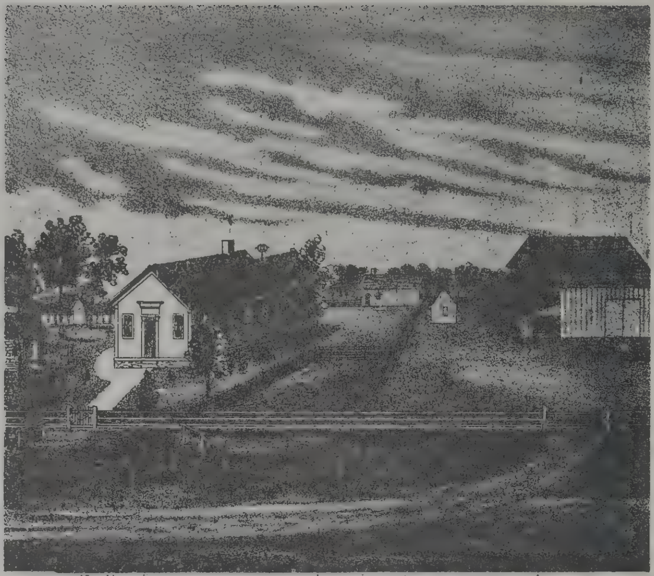
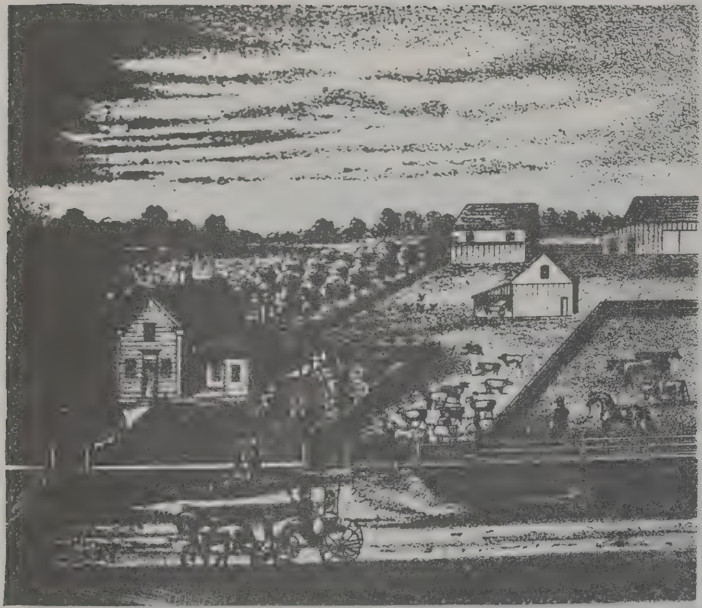
Ligonier Indiana



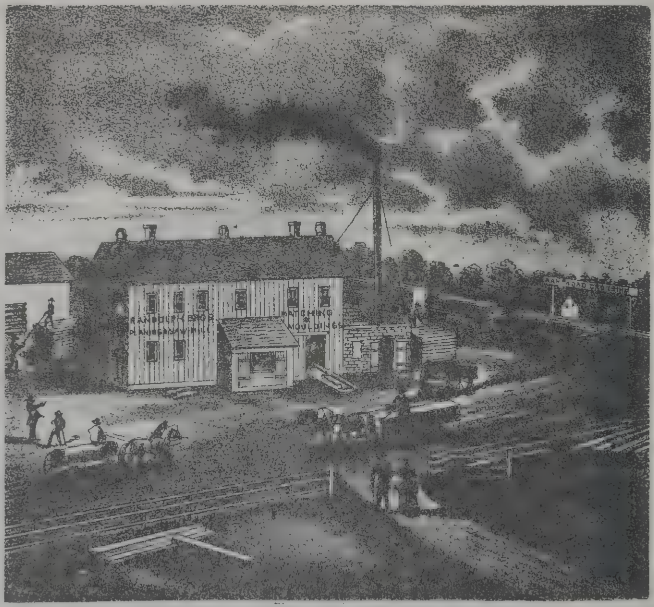
RES. OF **NATHAN ZIMMERMAN,** ALLEN TP. NOBLE CO. IND.



RES. OF **N. ROBERTS** SEC. 10 ALLEN TP. NOBLE CO. IND.



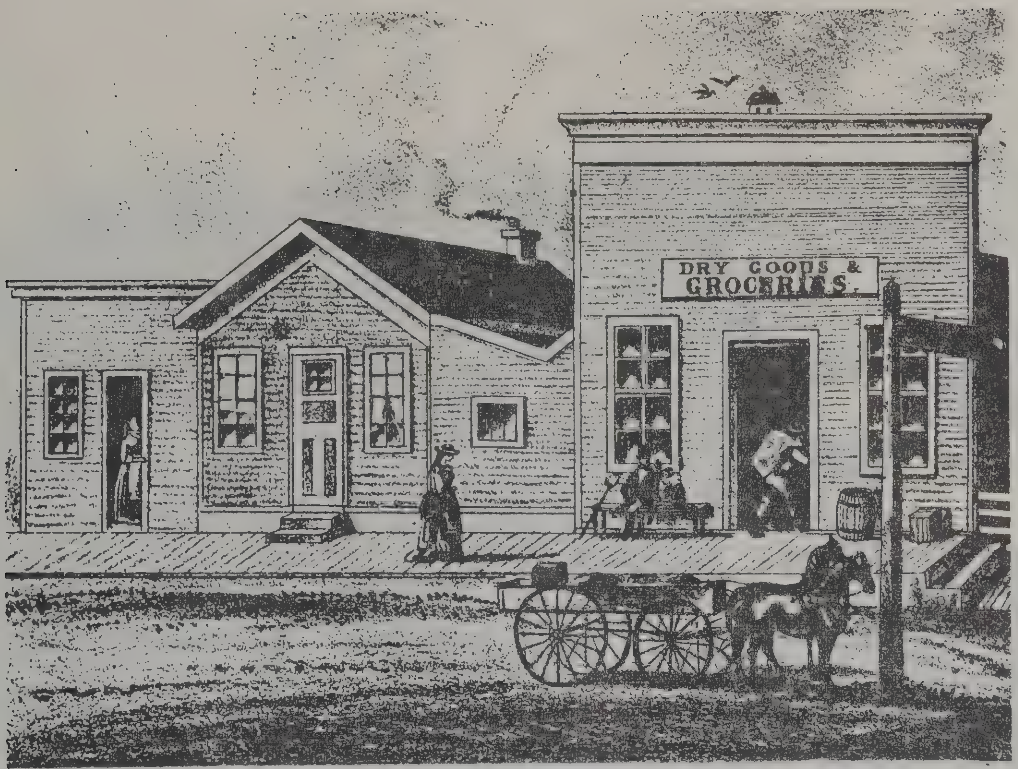
RES. OF **HIRAM ROBETS** SEC. 34 ALLEN TP. NOBLE CO. IND.



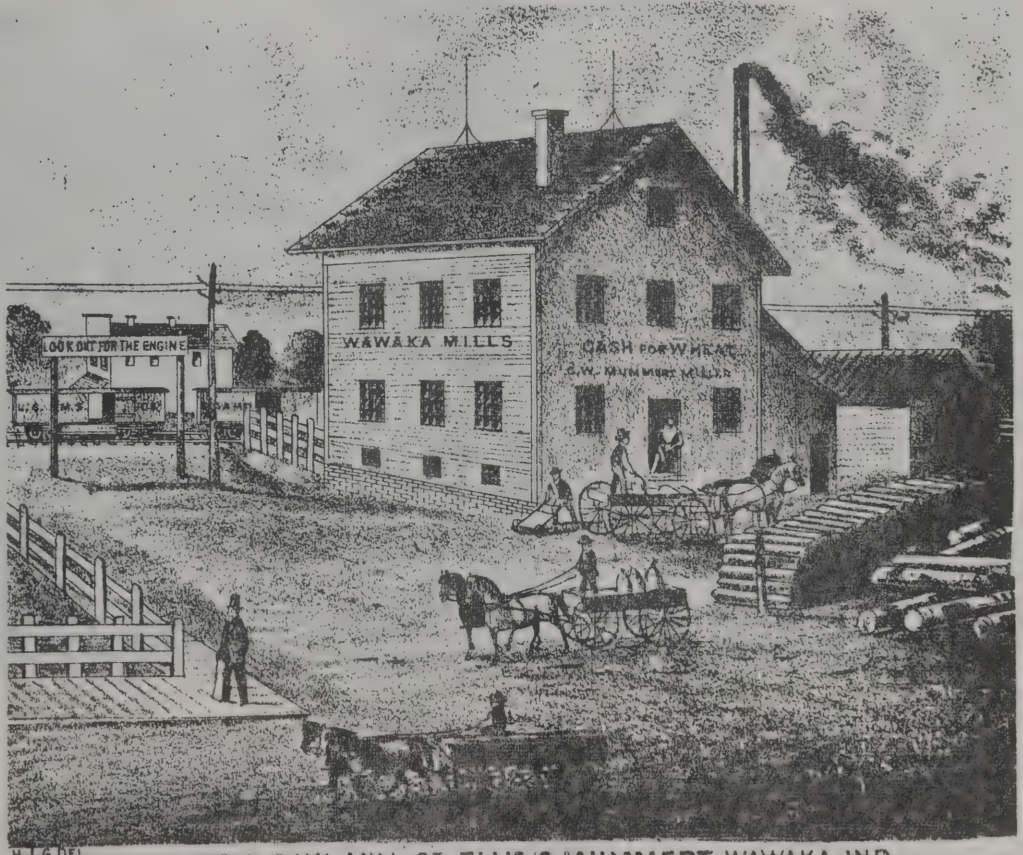
RANDOLPH BROS.
PLANING & SAW MILL
MATCHING & MOULDING

PLANING & SAW-MILL OF **RANDOLPH BROS.** LIGONIER IND.

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874

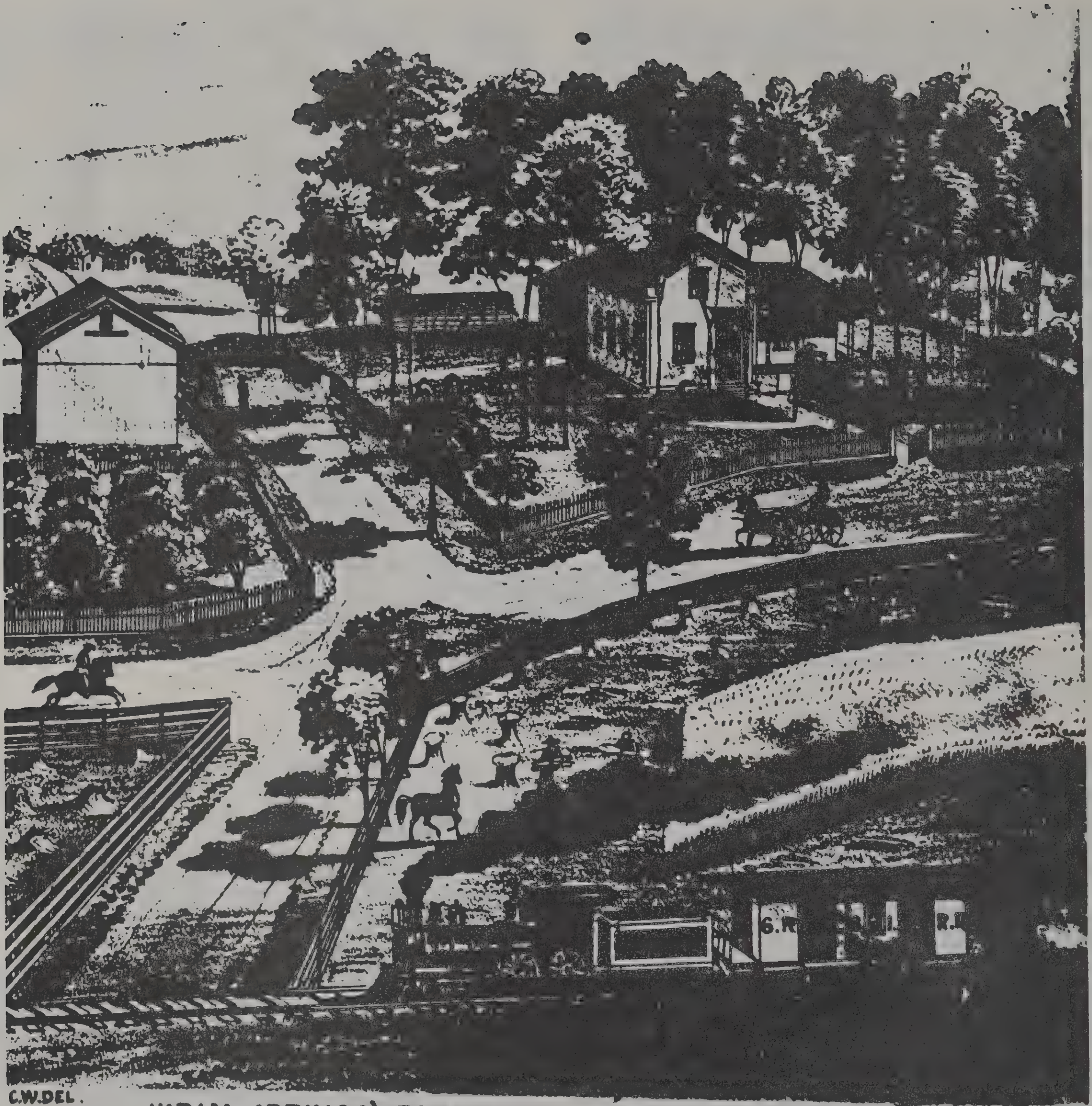

DRY GOODS &
GROCERIES.

H.J.G.DEL. RESIDENCE & STORE OF JOHN F. KNEPPER, WAWAKA, IND.


LOOK OUT FOR THE ENGINE
WAWAKA MILLS
CASH FOR WHEAT
C.W. MUMMERT MILLER

H.J.G.DEL. GRIST & SAW MILL OF ELLIS & MUMMERT, WAWAKA, IND.

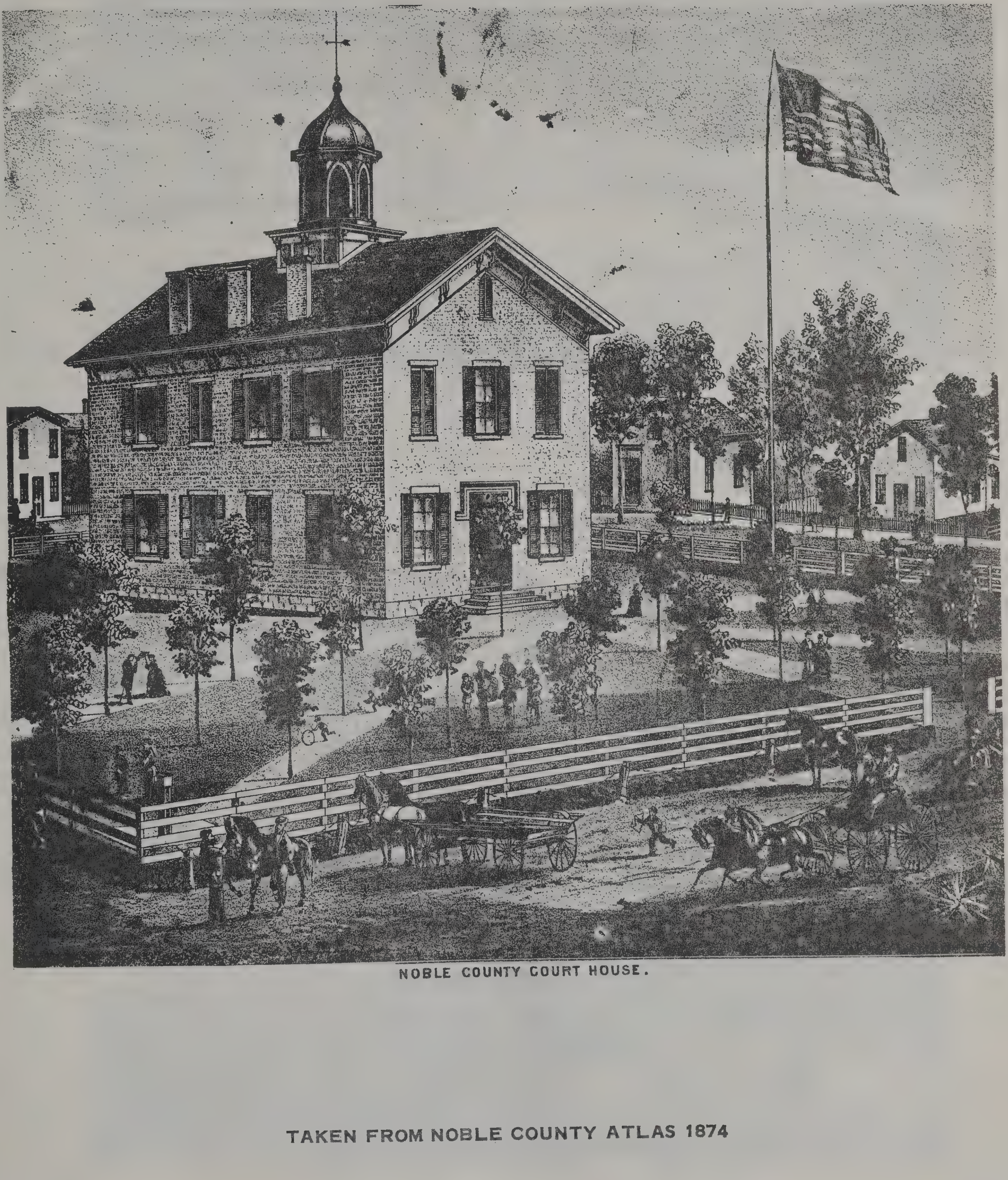
TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874



C.W.DEL.

HIRAM IDDINGS' RESIDENCE, SEC.4, ALLEN TP., NOBLE CO., IND.

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874



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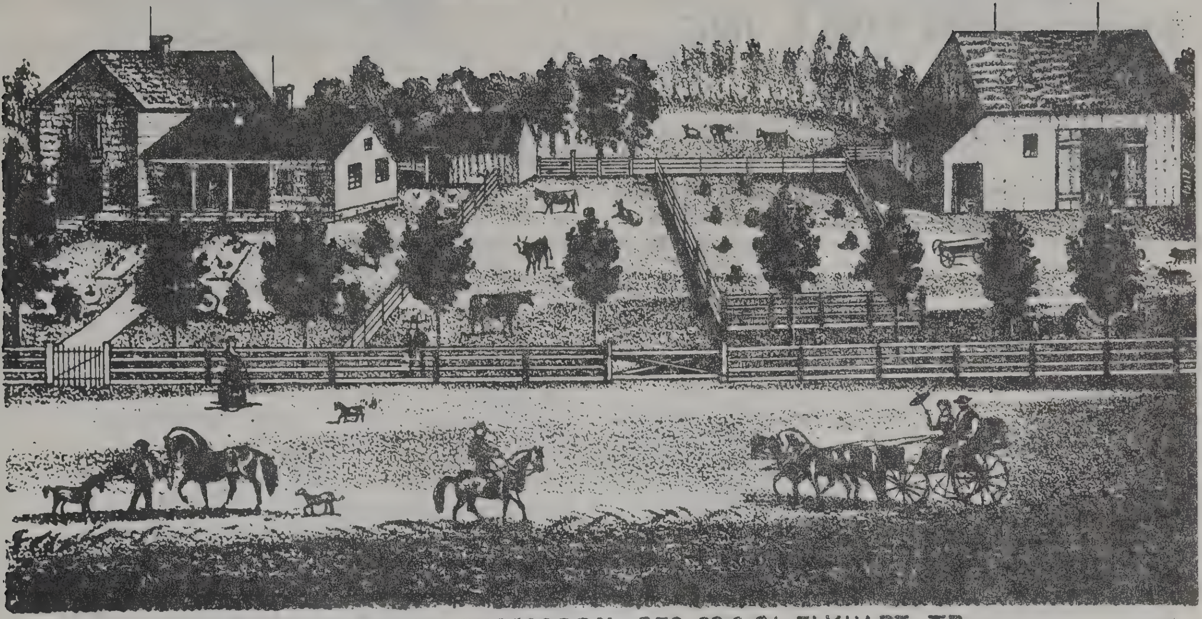
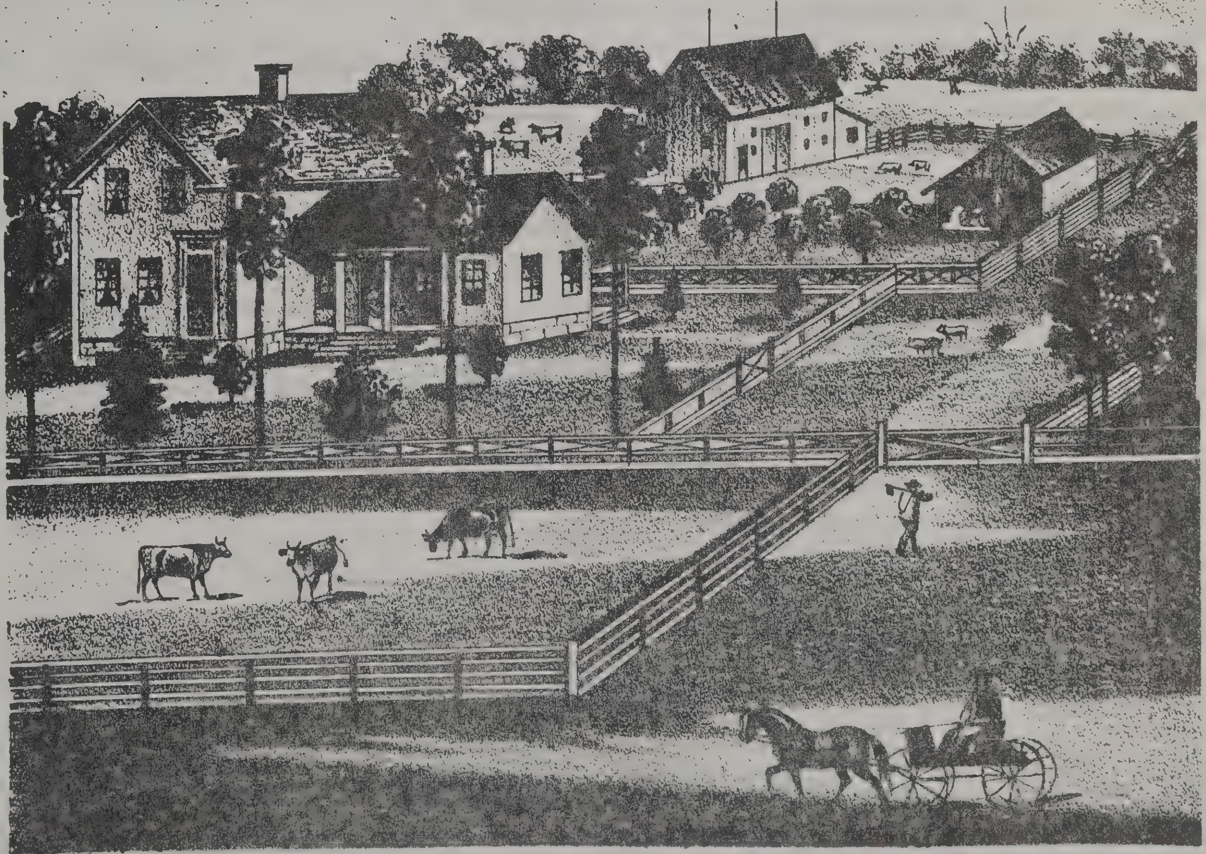
ALBION, INDIANA

JOHN GILBERT
General Excavating, Bulldozing
WAWAKA, INDIANA 46794
PHONE: 761-2524



RES. OF LYMAN THOMPSON SEC. 33, & 34, ELKHART TP.



RES. OF ISAAC TIBBOT, SEC. 27, WAWAKA, IND.

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874

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"Arcadian Liquid Nitrogen"
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CONSTRUCTION
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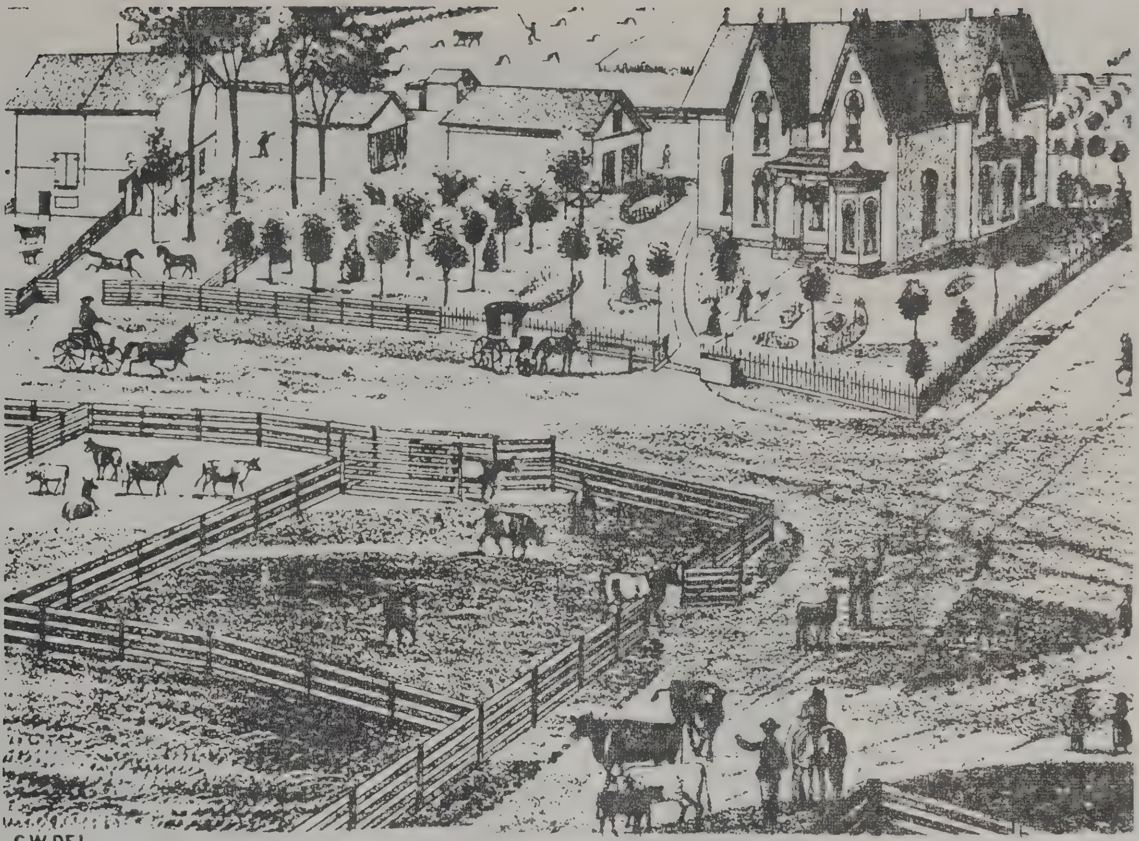


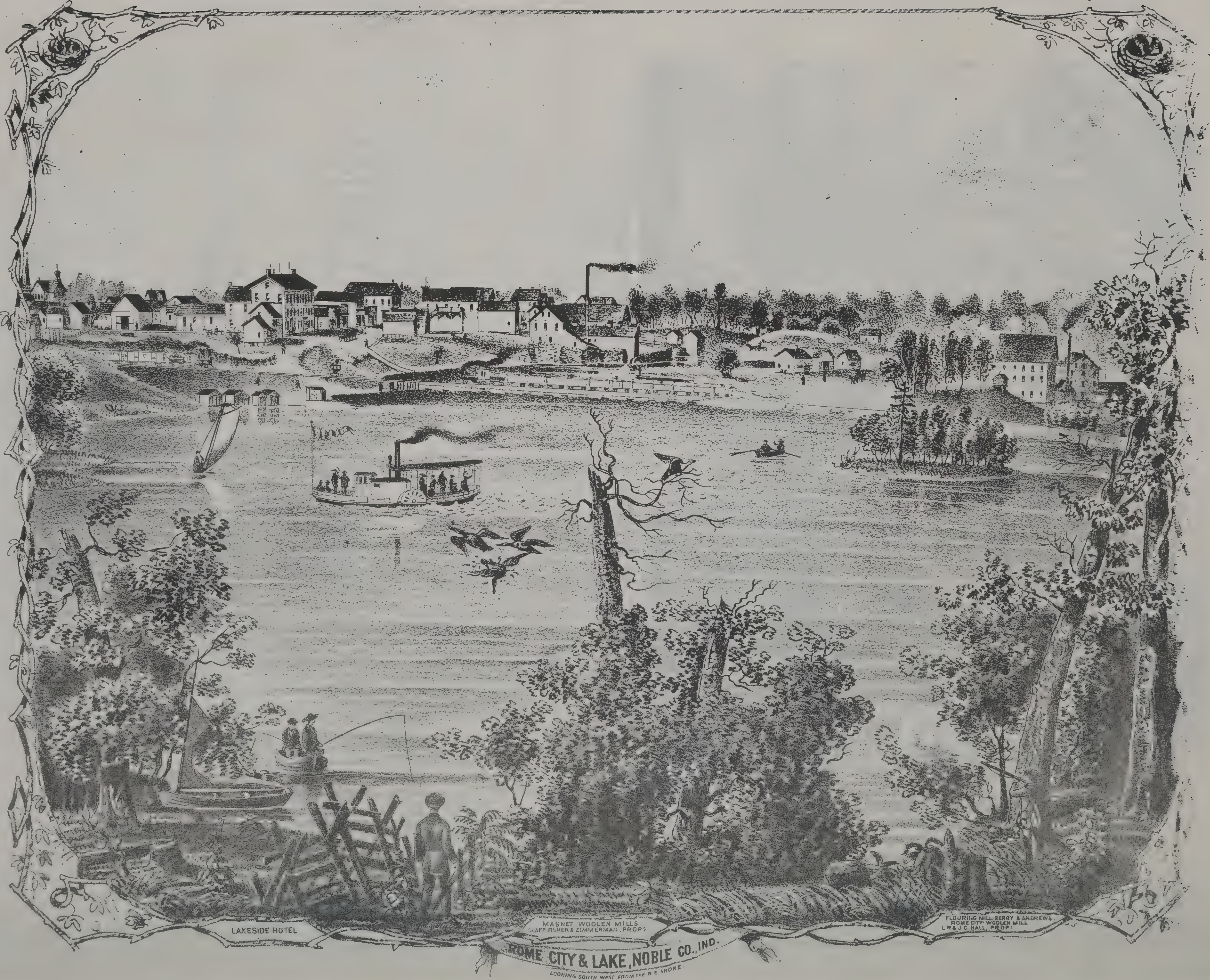
RES. OF E. B. SPENCER, SEC. 32, ALLEN TP, NOBLE CO., IND.
TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874

COMPLIMENTS OF

NORTHERN INDIANA

TELEPHONE COMPANY

WAWAKA, INDIANA


LAKESIDE HOTEL
MAGNET WOOLEN MILLS
CLAPP FISHER & ZIMMERMAN, PROPS
ROME CITY & LAKE, NOBLE CO., IND.
LOOKING SOUTH WEST FROM THE N E SHORE
FLOURING MILL BERRY & ANDREWS
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RTS. 6 & 3 INDIANA

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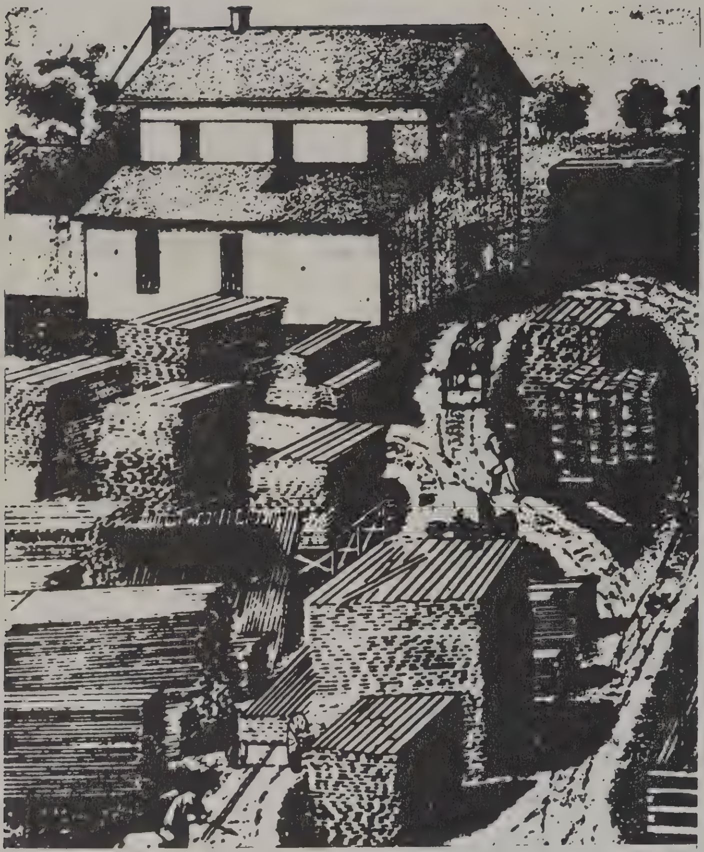
BANK**

ALBION INDIANA
MEMBER F. D. I. C.



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Ligonier, Indiana

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TO BE A PART OF
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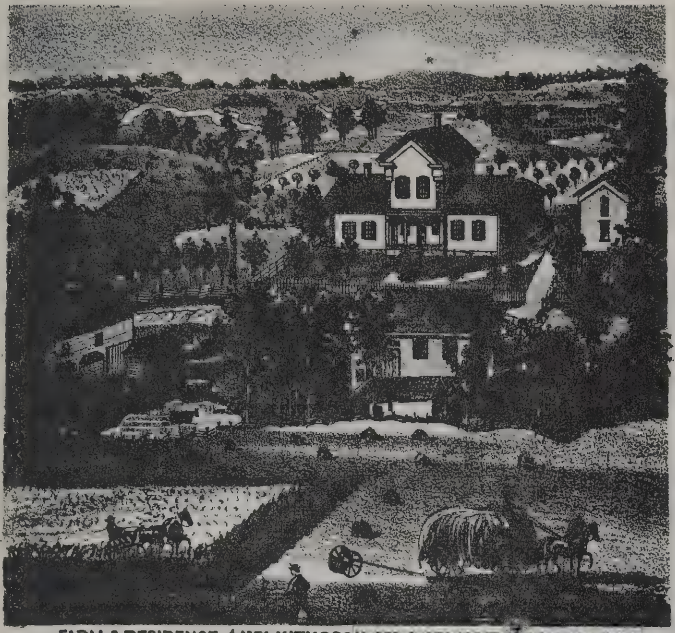
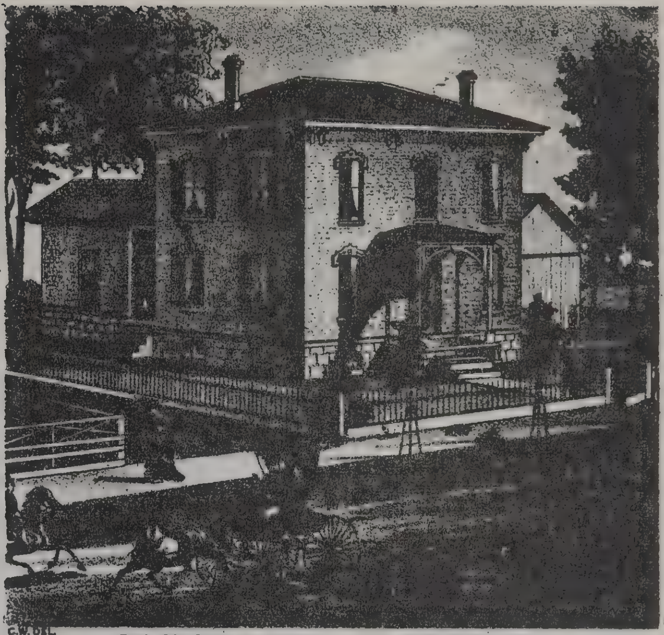
SESQUICENTENNIAL

KRAFT

KRAFT FOODS / KENDALLVILLE, INDIANA



FARM & RESIDENCE of Wm HITHCOCK, SEC. 8, ORANGE TP. NOBLE CO., IND



C.W. DEL.

RES. OF GEO. HARVEY, ALBION, NOBLE CO., IND.

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* * *

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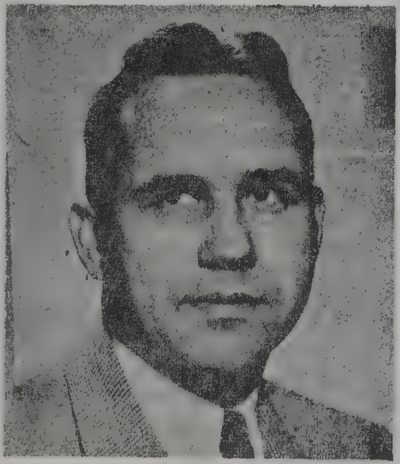
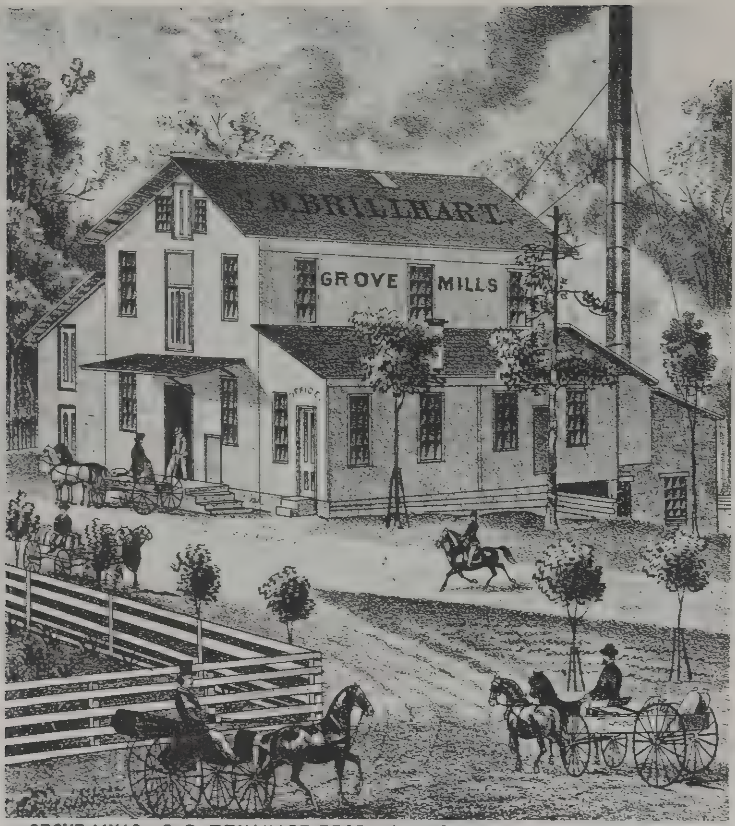


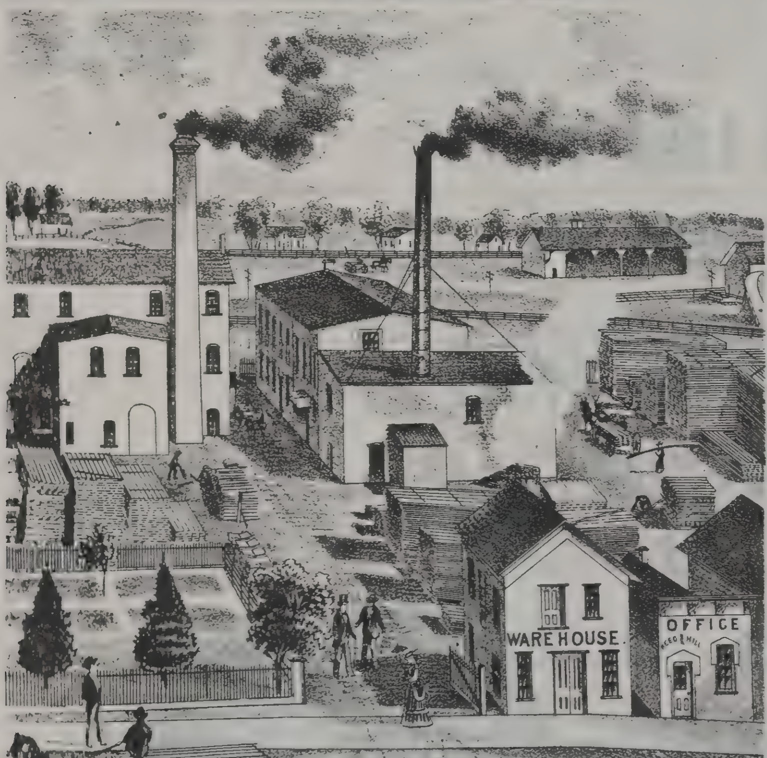
Charles M. Seneff, Mgr.

PHONE – Albion 636-2036

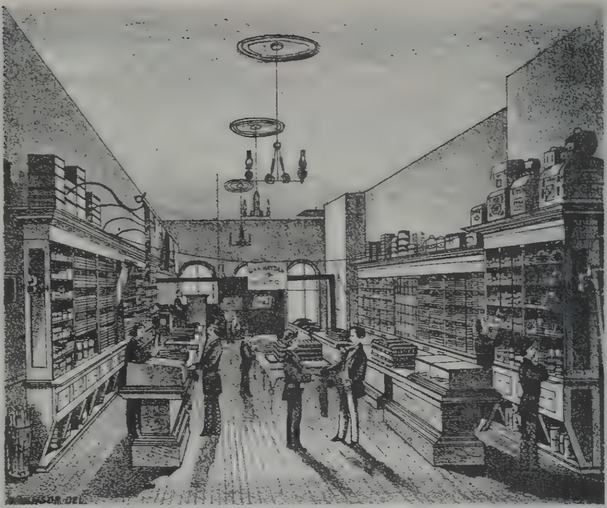
Federal LAND BANK Association


S.B. BRILLHART.
GROVE MILLS
OFFICE

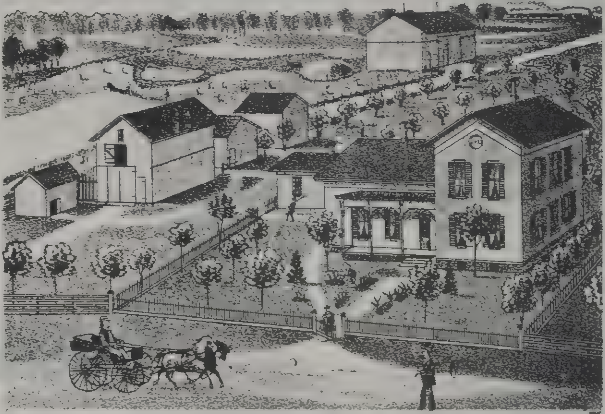
GROVE MILLS._ S.B. BRILLHART, PROP., MANUFACTURER OF FLOUR & FEED.
SPECIAL ATTENTION PAID TO CUSTOM WORK.


WARE HOUSE.
OFFICE
REED & HILL

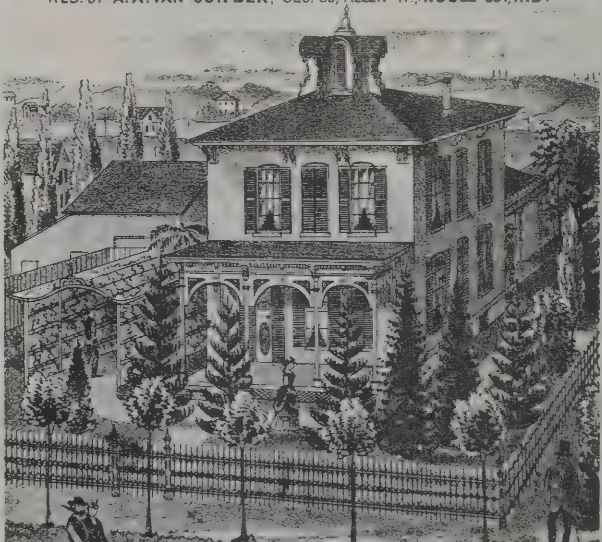
SASH, DOOR & BLIND MANUFACTORY & LUMBER YARD OF REED & HILL,
ESTABLISHED IN 1864, KENDALLVILLE, NOBLE CO., IND.



INTERIOR VIEW OF ENGEL & CO.'s POPULAR CLOTHING & MERCHANT TAILORING ESTABLISHMENT, *MAIN ST., KENDALLVILLE, IND.*_ LARGEST EXCLUSIVE CLOTHING HOUSE IN **NOBLE AND ADJOINING COUNTIES**.

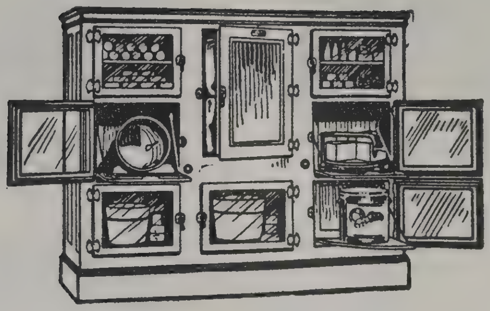


RES. OF A.A. VAN GORDER, SEC. 36, ALLEN TP., NOBLE CO., IND.



RES. OF L.N. REED, BUILT IN 1860,
KENDALLVILLE, NOBLE CO., COR. OF MITCHELL & ORCHARD STS., IND.

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874



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Sesquicentennial
Souvenirs

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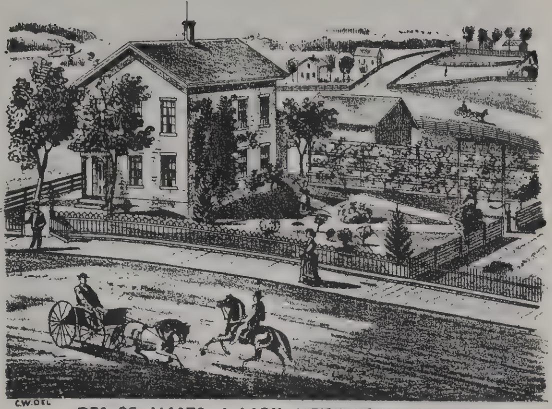
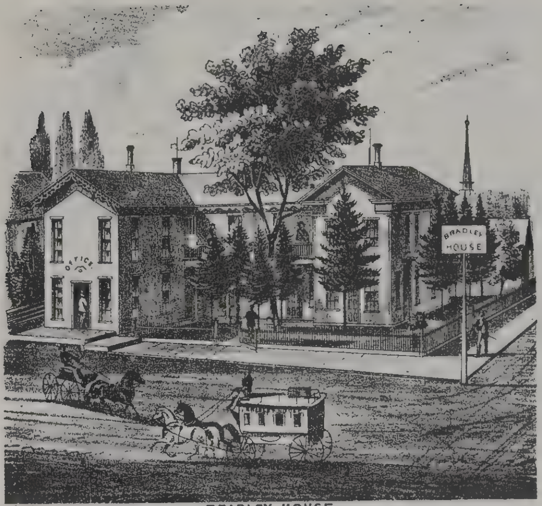
TOYS * GIFTS
PERSONAL ITEMS
* NOTIONS *

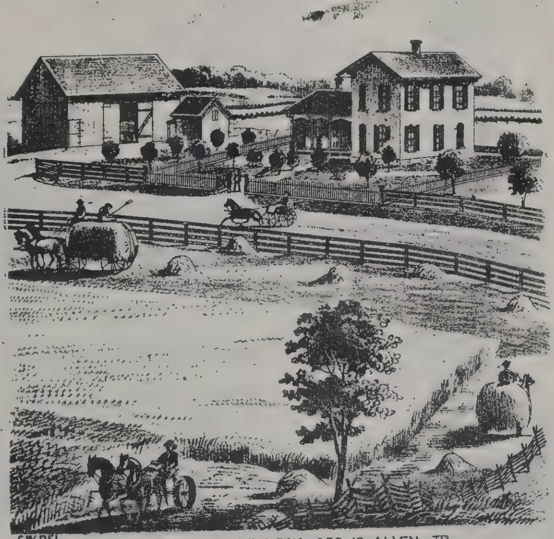
Leedy's
family Store
CROMWELL / INDIANA



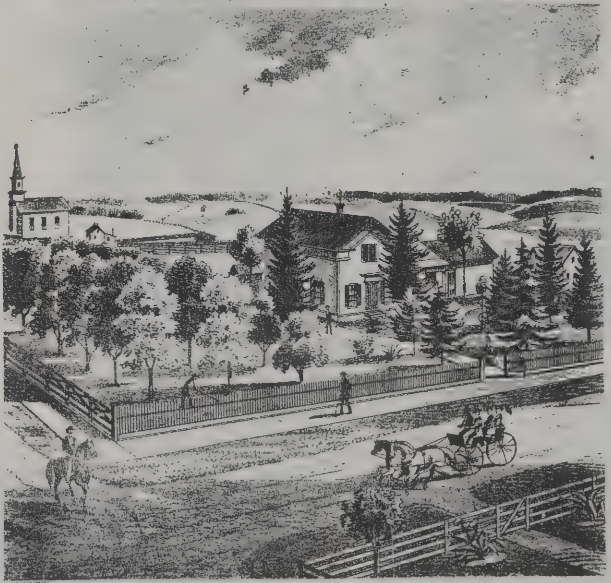
RES. OF JAMES J. LASH, ALBION, NOBLE CO., IND.


OFFICE
BRADLEY HOUSE
C.W.DEL.

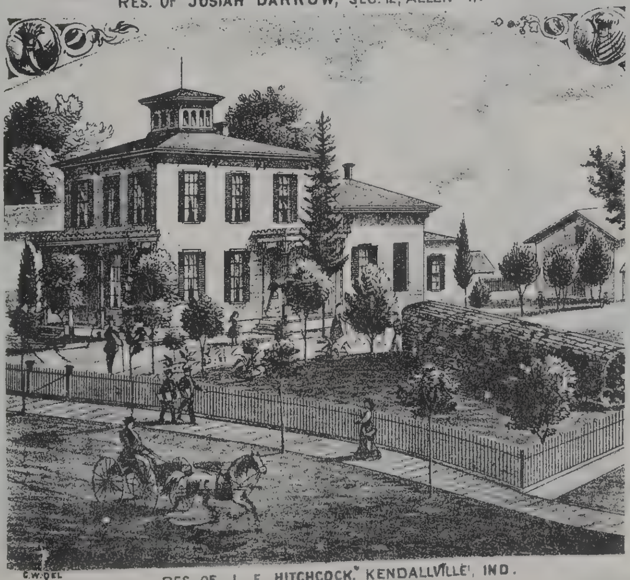
BRADLEY HOUSE
Mrs S.A. BRADLEY, PROP. ALBION, NOBLE CO., IND.



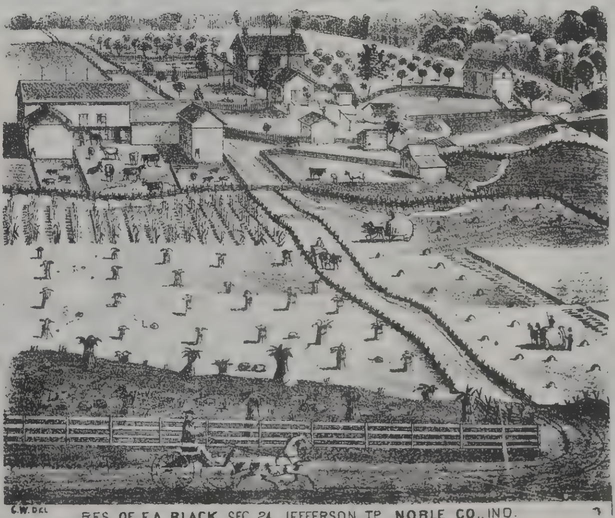
RES. OF JOSIAH DARROW, SEC. 12, ALLEN TP.



RES. OF Wm C. WILLIAMS, ALBION, NOBLE CO., IND.



RES. OF L. F. HITCHCOCK, KENDALLVILLE, IND.

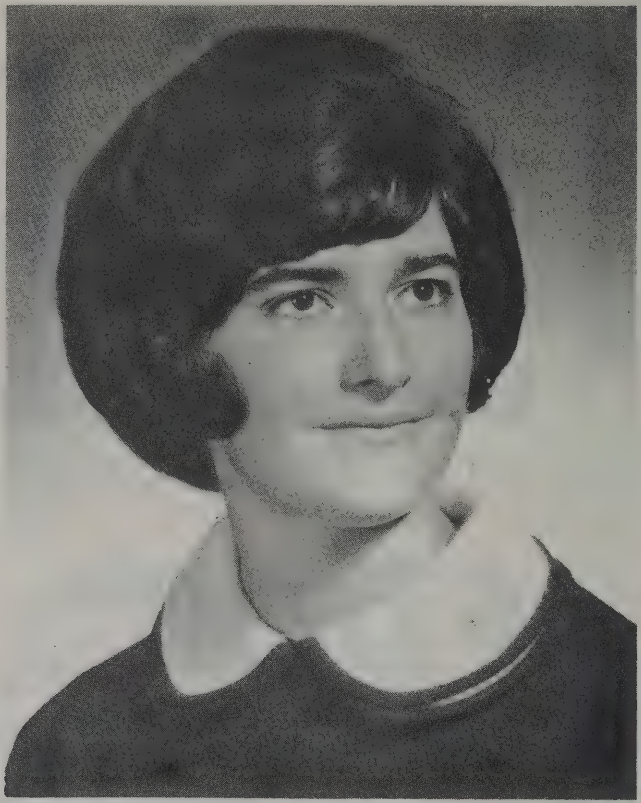


RES OF F.A. BLACK, SEC. 24, JEFFERSON TP. NOBLE CO., IND.

TAKEN FROM NOBLE COUNTY ATLAS 1874

Sesquicentennial Princesses

Sue Hain



Sue Buffenbarger

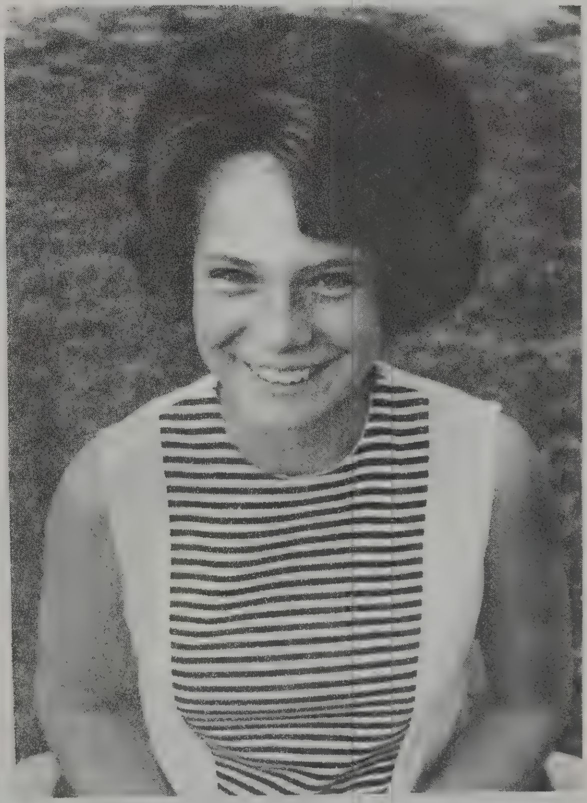
Sharon Boszer

Sesquicentennial Princesses

Joy Perry

Sue Ann Stump

Ruth Cook



Cathy Clouse

Centennial Homes in Noble County

Below is an incomplete list of homes and farms which have been in the same family for a hundred or more years. We regret that the list is not complete. The present owners are the ones named.

Elkhart Township
Wayland Rose
R.R. 4 Albion
Harold Seymour
Harold Cole
Allen Township
Max Harlan
Hiram King
Henry Lemper
Solaman Walters
G.F. Bodenhafer
John M. Diehm
T.F. Blackman
Washington Township
Barbara Wilson
Forrest F. Keister
Glen Kilgore
Helen Adair Barnhart
Stanley Buckles
Allen Beers
Jennie Piper Galloway
Marjorie Hontz Bushong
Curtis Weigel
Mrs. Floyd Galloway
Bill Brunswick
Leah Reed Keister
Fred Pollock
Mrs. LeRoy Hontz
Green Township
Jack McConnell
John Boggs
York Township
John C. Palmer
Joe Seaberg
Walter Butz
Howard Palmer Koenig
Swan Township
Sam Broughton
Joe (?) Cramer
Samuel Whonsetler
Wayne Township
George Bodenhafer
John Longyear
Henry Poppy
Peter Parr
Jerome Sherman
Sparta Township
Mrs. Neal Hontz
Deloss Maggart
Berneice Bickle
Orlo Werker
Duane Shisler
Cemira Kiser Albers
Mrs. Bessie Hontz
Joyce Tucker Hontz
Meredith Greider
Mrs. Tony Kreager
Charles Archer
Claud Kimmell
Baron Stellar
Joyce Tucker Hontz
Perry Township
Helen Simmons
Dean Hite
Hazel Harper Ebert
Everett Schlabach
Melvin Schlotterbach
Carlyle Herald
Russell Conrad
Homer Campbell
Maxine Sachett Hite

Early Religious History

Indiana was settled by two diametrically opposed groups, in philosophy and mode of life. Most of the first settlers were deeply religious and started religious services soon after their arrival. Along with them, sometimes preceding, sometimes following but always present were the scalawags, the rowdies and the lawless.

Noble County was no worse or better than the rest of the state. The rowdy and the lawless infested the lowlands primarily in the southeastern portion of the county, issuing from their hideouts to molest churches and church groups. They frequently set fire to and destroyed churches and buildings used by worshippers and broke up meetings whenever possible and generally harrassed the religious element.

(continued on next page)

Left Column: Albion Methodist; Kendallville Church of God; Sparta Church of Christ; Bethlehem Lutheran; Wolf Lake Methodist. Right Column: Burr Oak Baptist; Albion Evangelical United Brethren; Cromwell Methodist; Ligonier Methodist; Merriam Christian Chapel.

Top to Bottom:
St. Mary's Catholic, Avilla;
First Methodist, Kendallville
First Baptist, Rome City

The first sermon preached in the county was by an unknown Presbyterian minister on Perry's Prairie at a date unknown. But the Presbyterians were not the first to establish themselves. The Baptists and Methodists appeared in the county about the same time.

The Baptists built the first church in Kendallville in 1851 with the Baptists, Presbyterians, the Methodists and perhaps the Catholics sharing the building. The Baptists first worshipped in a schoolhouse.

The first Methodist minister, date not definitely known, was Rev. Robinson. In 1840 the parish was organized and met in a barn which was burnt by the Black Legs. The present church was built in 1872.

The Methodist Protestants founded Allen Chapel in 1849.

The Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians met in Ligonier in 1831 with the Methodists formed in 1840.

The Methodist church in Kendallville, and the Presbyterian churches in Kendallville and Ligonier are perhaps the oldest church buildings in the county.

The Lutherans became established in Albion in 1848 with Rev. Jacob Siedel as minister. Its first building was erected in 1855, in Kendallville in 1856 and in Washington Twp. in 1861.

The Presbyterian church was first organized in 1837 in "Haw Patch" definite location unknown but operated in Ligonier in 1837 with Rev. Bliss as minister.

William Mitchell of Kendallville donated land to all the Kendallville churches for building purposes.

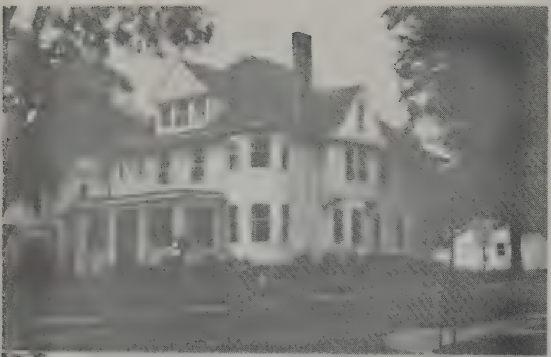
The Roman Catholics began operations in Avilla before 1836 with Father Badin serving. Father Benoit established the Avilla parish in 1853. Ege was established either that year or the next. Kendallville became a station in 1899.

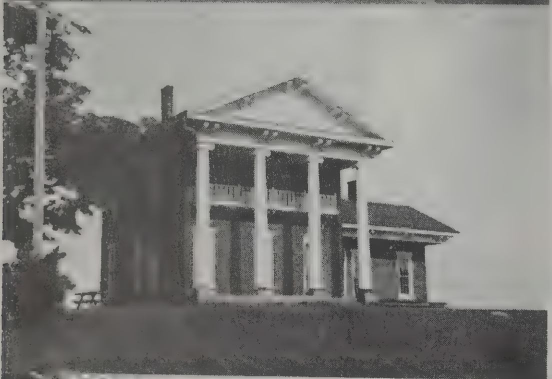
(continued on page 94)

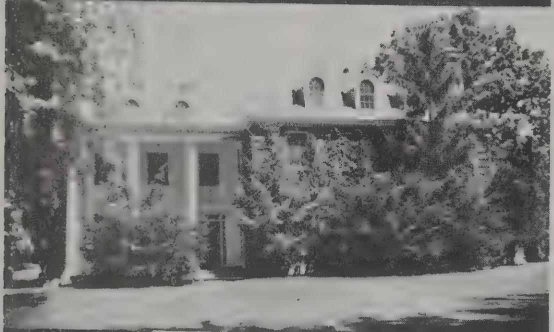
Top to Bottom;
First Presbyterian, Ligonier
Immaculate Conception, Catholic, Ege
First Presbyterian, Kendallville

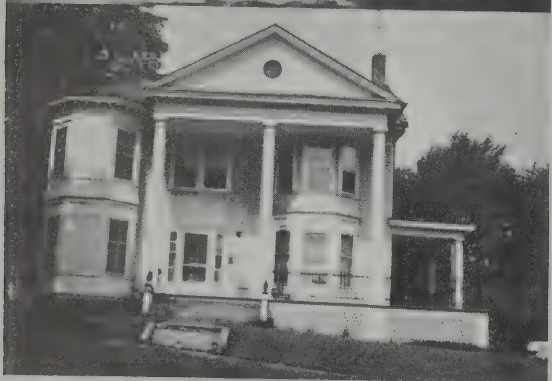
Historic Houses and Scenes in Noble County

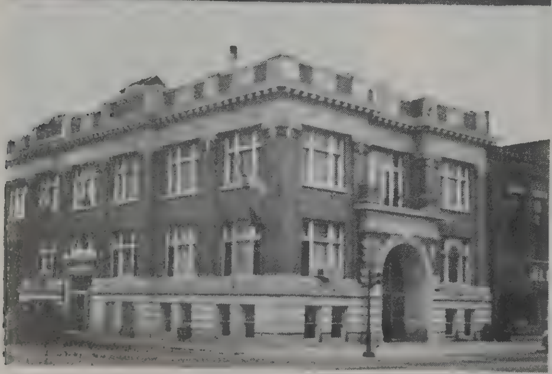
(continued from page 5)





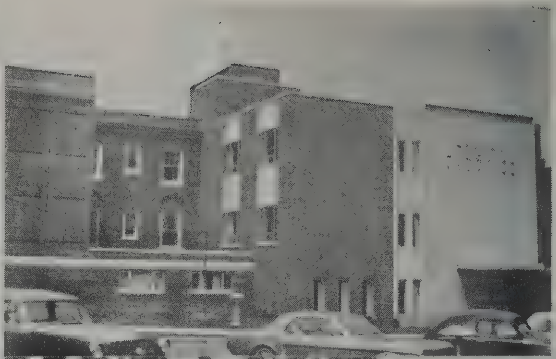


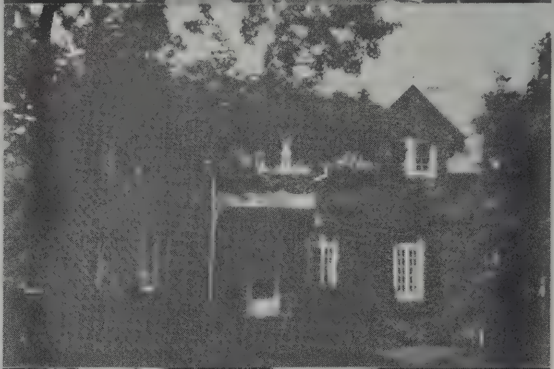


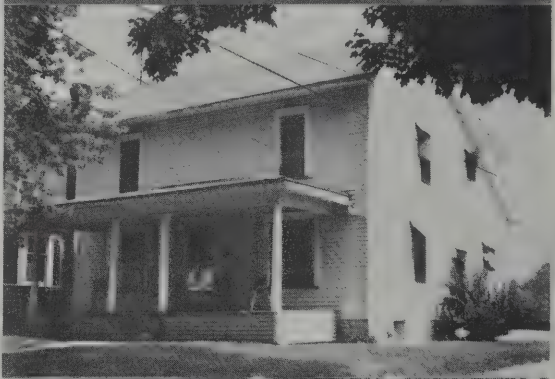


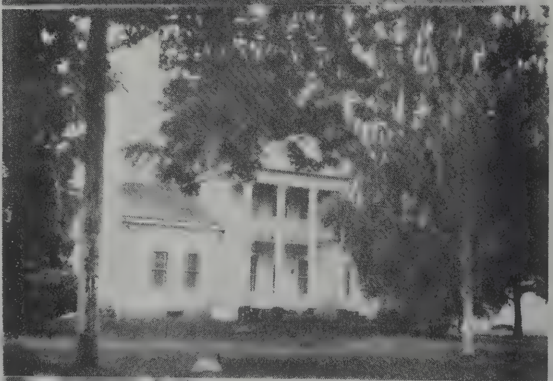
On the left from top to bottom: Home on S. Main Street, Ligonier; Whitford House, Road 3 north of Kendallville; McCray Home, E. Mitchell Street, Kendallville; City Hall, Kendallville.

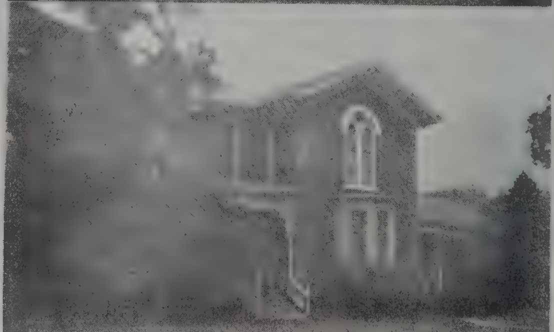
On the right from top to bottom: McCray Memorial Hospital, Kendallville; Brick Home, N. Orange Street, Albion; Frances Dingman Home, first frame house in Kendallville; Southern Type Home, Road 6 west of junction with 9; Home corner Diamond and Water Streets, Kendallville, over a hundred years old.











Prominent Citizens of Early Noble County

Elmer McGray
Kendallville, industrialist, founder McGray Refrigerator Co.

Don C. Hitchcock
Merchant at Augusta, county recorder, milling at Wolcottville, associated with Wm. Mitchell in Kendallville

Millard F. Owens
Rome City, boat livery, railroader, G.R.I. and L.S.M.S., manager of Island Hotel and Restaurant

James C. Green
Sparta Township, farmer

John Deible
Kendallville, lumber and planing mill

Martin L. Hussey
Cromwell, druggist, also dealer in grain, wool, buggies and real estate

John L. Henry
Allen Township, furniture and undertaking, politics

Mary Haney
Mother of Allen Haney, blacksmith and wagon maker

James R. Baker
Kendallville, hardware and manufacturer of specialities

George W. Piper
Washington Township, farmer

George Rumsbaugh
Jefferson and Orange Townships, farmer, Civil War soldier

Early Religious History

(continued from page 91)

The Christian or Disciples Church was first organized in 1853 in the Bristol schoolhouse. Churches were built in Sparta in 1870, Ligonier in 1863, in Kimmell in 1878 and Kendallville in 1891, though there had been active work in the communities before the founding of the congregations.

The first Church of God was built in Greene Twp., and in York Twp. in 1879.

The United Brethren got its start in Albion in 1867. Ligonier was born, died and then finally resurrected in 1874.

The Universalist was organized in Ligonier in 1854.

The Adventists had two congregations, Wolf Lake, 1878 and Ligonier, 1875.

The Episcopalians established a church in Kendallville in 1892 but never flourished so that by 1940 only the building remained.

The Hebrews had a congregation in Ligonier in 1867 in the Hostetter Building, but now worship in Fort Wayne.

The Dunkards and Amish built in Perry Twp. in 1879.

Present day churches include all these and various others so now nearly fifty churches are active in the county.

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Noble County Committee
for
1816 Indiana's Sesquicentennial 1966

Photo by B. Gisel, K'ville News-Sun

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---

NOBLE COUNTY

by

Mentor Herron

There's an Indiana County
That we're proud of as can be
Where the sun's a little brighter
And the sky's a deep blue sea
Where the summer's always green
Full of joy for you and me.
Where good will is all around.

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It's Noble, Noble, Noble County
Our county that we love.

In the beauty of our woodlands
Of our lakes and gorgeous hills.
Everyone who lives in Noble County
Has a million thrills.
It is here God shows His handiwork
In Nature so sublime
And there's beauty all the time.

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EVELYN R. MORR

Democratic Candidate
for
Noble County

RECORDER
NOV. 8TH ELECTION

DAVE WEBER

Democratic Candidate
for
AUDITOR

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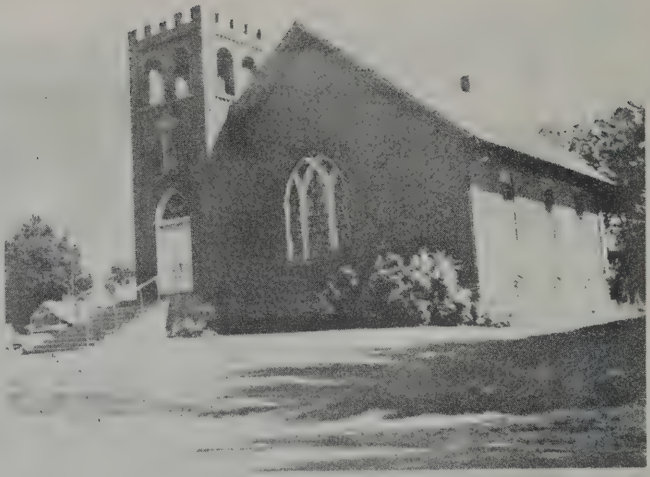
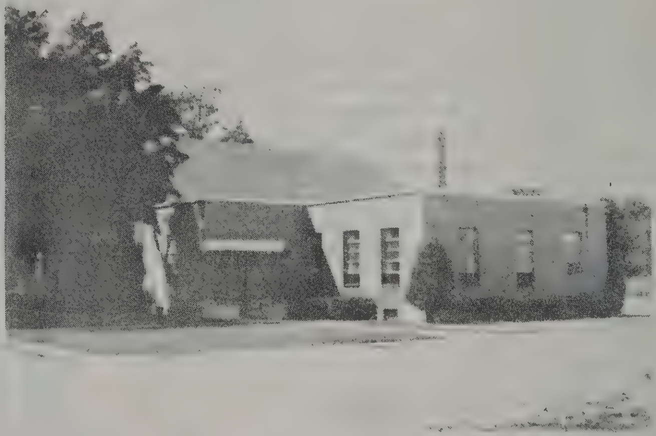


Church of Christ
Brimfield



Church of the Brethren
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